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oxidized sterling silver, 24k gold, amber, orange diamonds
diameter 3 ¾"
(see feature on p. 22)

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CABINETS OF CURIOSITIES, or *Wunderkammers*, were far-reaching collections dating from the Renaissance, amassed to induce wonder and offer mini encyclopedias. Everything exotic, expensive, or extraordinary, whether natural or manmade—minerals, bones, shells, antiques, specimens, medical oddities, gems, objets d'art—was eligible. The juxtapositions were intended to encourage curiosity and an appreciation for creation's astounding array.

The jewelry of Australian artist Marian Hosking, featured here, is founded on a similar practice of collection and display in order to provoke contemplation. Her transformations of indigenous plants, materials, and artifacts spur us to reconsider the surrounding world. "Interruption of the viewer's assumptions is one of the principal intentions of my work," says Hosking. It is further meant to kindle awe; as Marjorie Simon writes, Hosking "disproves the notion that a sense of wonder is impossible in the digital age."

Wonder is also generated by the jewelry of Germany's Atelier Zobel, spotlighted in our cover article. Merging masterful skill with adventurous design and a panoply of materials—multi-hued metals and rare stones mingle with the likes of ancient glass and lava—the studio produces pieces that are wearable marvels unto themselves.

This issue of *Metalsmith* could indeed be likened to a *Wunderkammer*, conjoining curiosities of the natural realm (medical conditions in the feature "From Amulet to Tumor," and nature-based works by artists Hratch Babikian, Reiko Ishiyama, and Heather White van Stolk in "Reviews") with examples of the highest artifice, including the kinetic animals of Cathy McClure. And just like historical chambers of curiosity, this magazine will hopefully transport you to the region of wonder.... m

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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Published by the Society of North American Goldsmiths

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PRINTER St Croix Press, Inc., committed to using environmentally friendly materials and methods.

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Metalsmith (ISSN 0270-1146) is published in January, March, May, August, and October by SNAG, 540 Oak Street, Suite A, Eugene, OR 97401, 541-345-5689, www.snagmetalsmith.org.

Membership rates $79/year and up, full membership includes five-issue subscription to *Metalsmith*. Special student rates. Subscription to only *Metalsmith*: $34/year and up.

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The opinions expressed in *Metalsmith* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the staff or directors of SNAG or *Metalsmith*. Address unsolicited editorial material to: Suzanne Ramljak, 22 Rockwell Road, Bethel, CT 06801. Materials will be handled with care, but the magazine assumes no responsibility for them.

Metalsmith is indexed in the Art Index and EBSCO Media. Newsstand distribution: COMAG Marketing Group, 155 Village Blvd, Princeton, NJ 08540.

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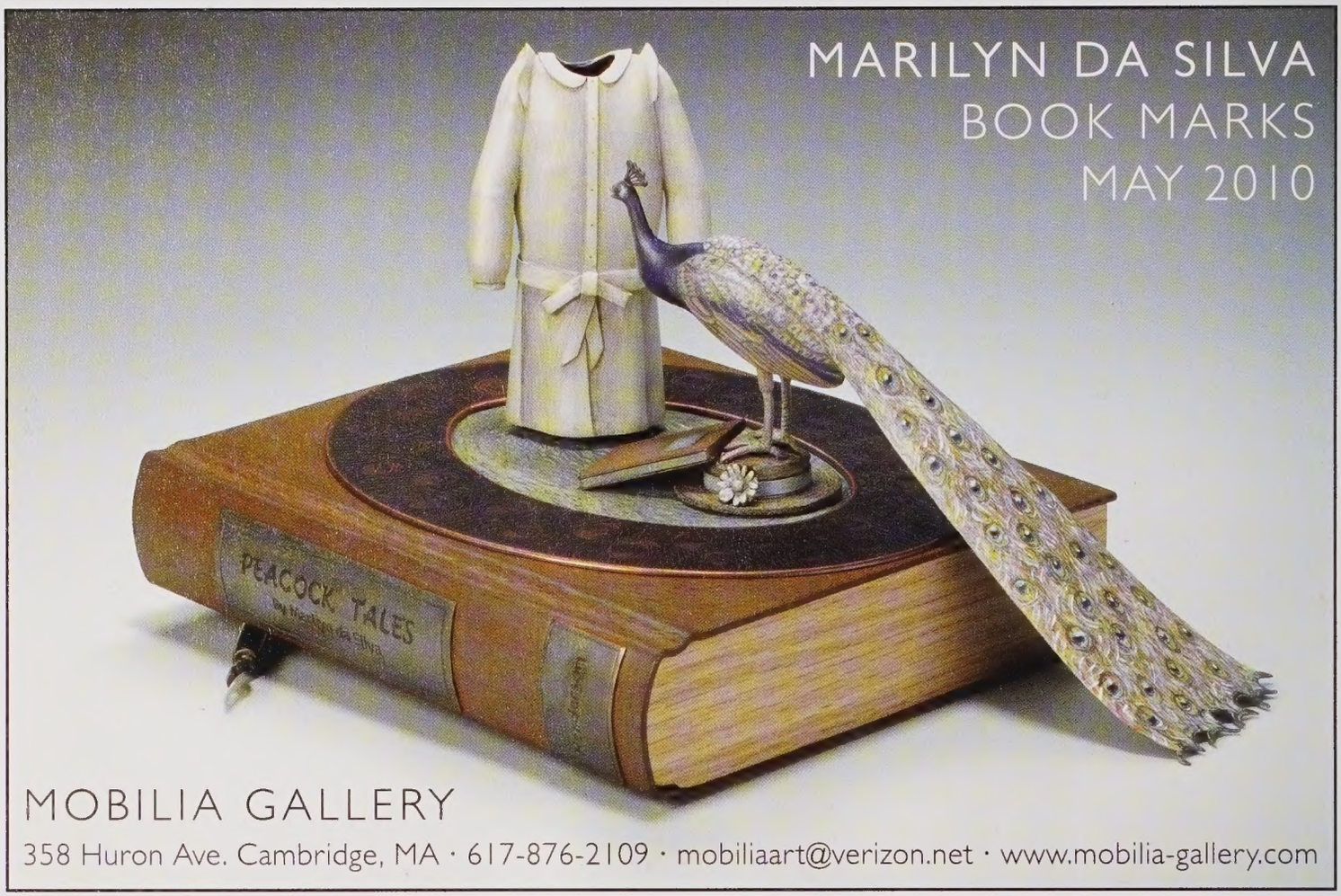

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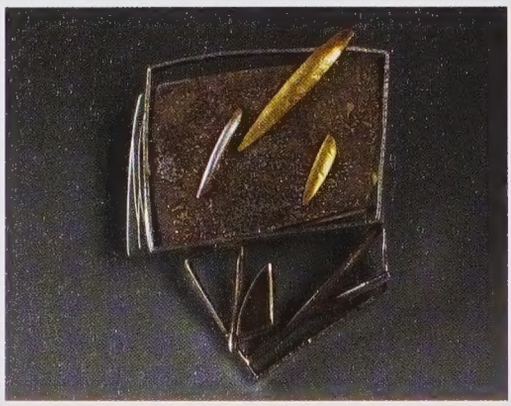
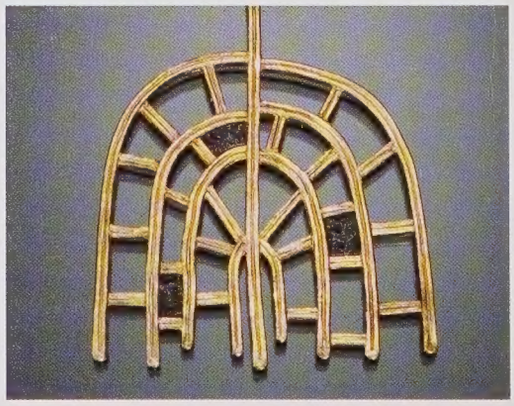


Glenda Arentzen *pin, s/s, 24k, carved acrylic*



Robin Cust *necklace, fabricated 18k & steel, 2010*

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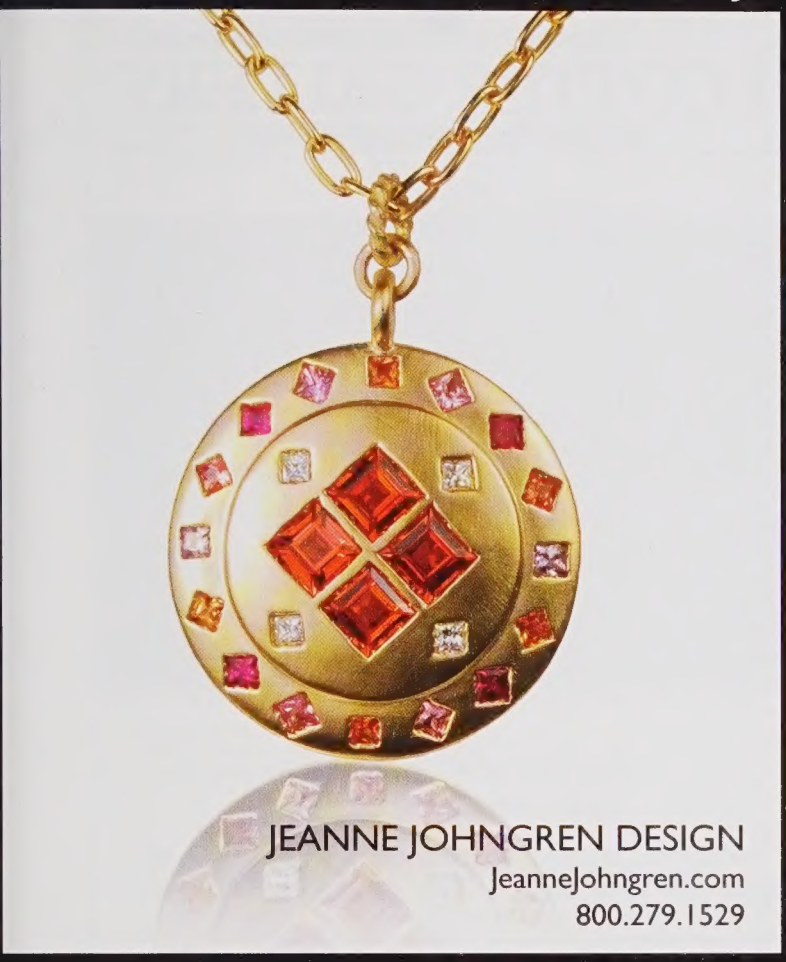

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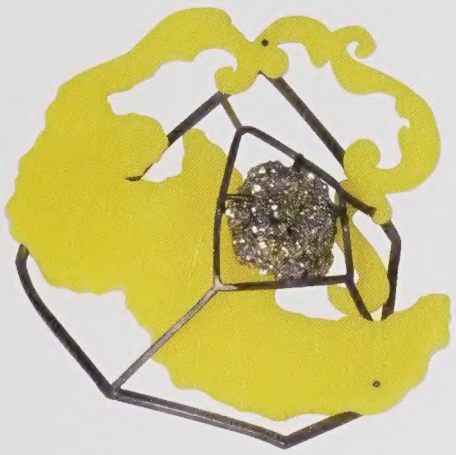

photo: Jon Snieden

Leslie Shershow. untitled. pendant, sterling silver, thermoplastic, pyrite.

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Daniel Jocz, Metalsmith 1995 Exhibition in Print

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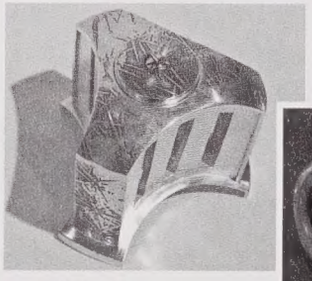
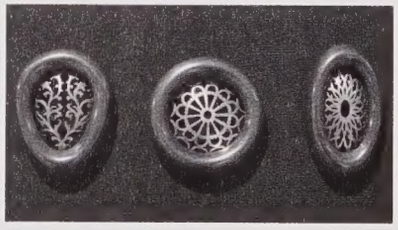


Anne Wolf, *Caught*, 2007



Chris Irick, *Fountain Elms Brooch Series*, 2009

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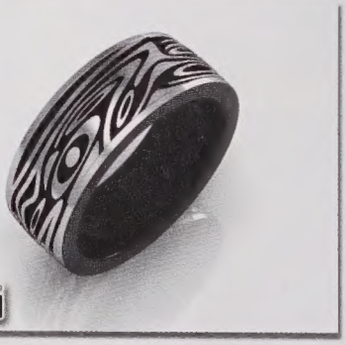

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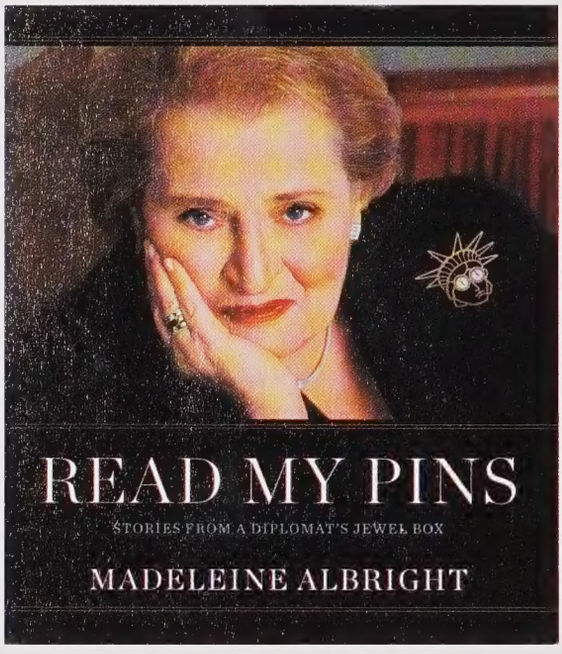
ANTONIO PINEDA, PECTORAL NECKLACE WITH LAYERED FEATHER DESIGN, SILVER, ONYX INLAY, 1953–PRESENT. PHOTO: DON COLE.

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box

BY MADELEINE ALBRIGHT
HARPER COLLINS PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK, 2009
BY KATE FOGARTY

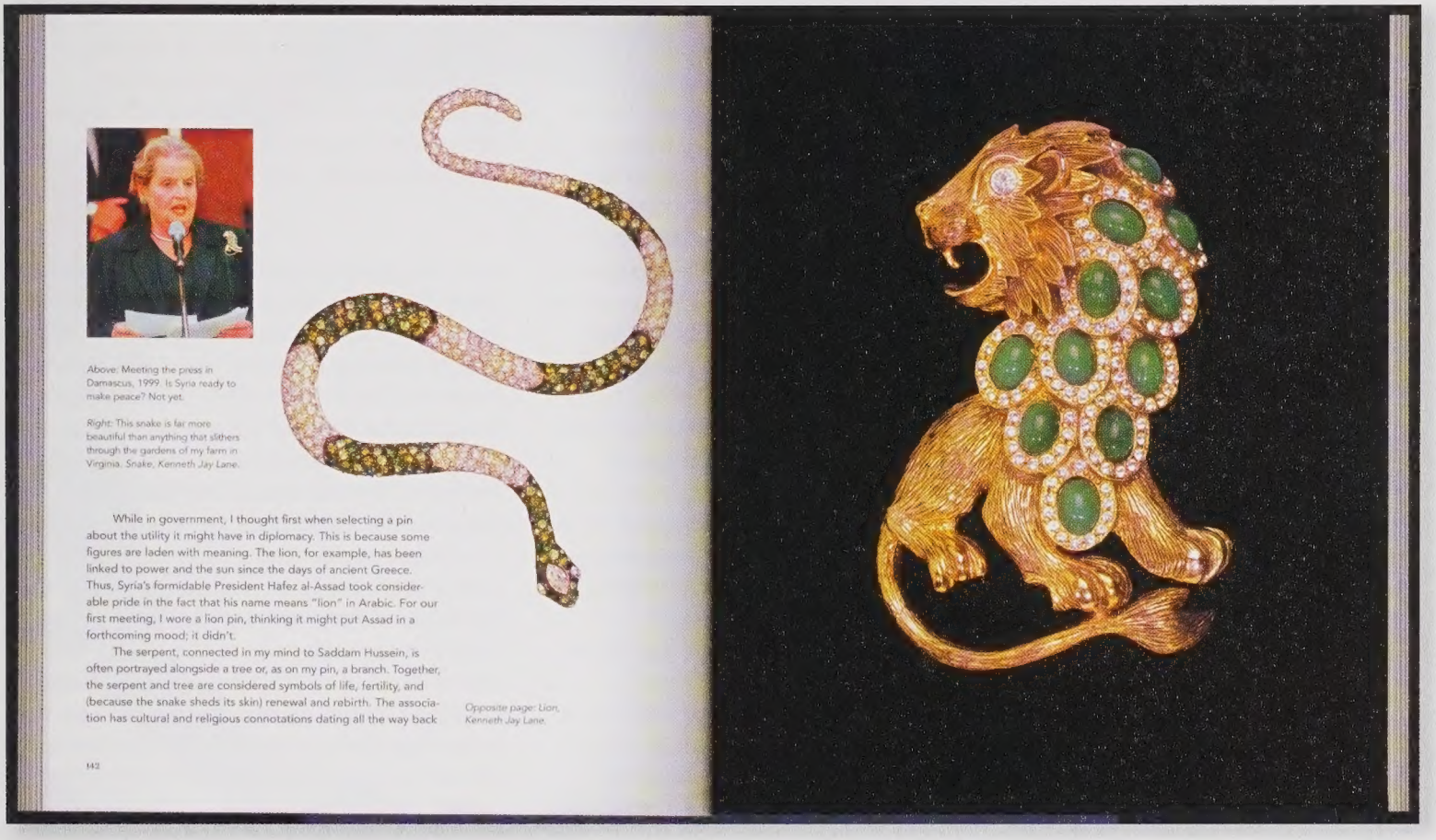
"AS A RULE, I prefer polite talk, but there are moments when only plain speaking will do," asserts Madeleine Albright. And what a thrill for metal artists that the renowned stateswoman, professor, and author has often chosen to convey her strongest diplomatic messages not only with words but with jewelry. Albright served under President Bill Clinton from 1993 to 2001, first as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, then as Secretary of State. Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin once told Clinton that he routinely checked to see what brooch Albright was wearing and tried to decipher its meaning—and he was in good company: world leaders, news organizations, even blogs devoted to the topic of her pins tracked her accessory choices with intense interest.



In her enjoyable recent book *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box*, Albright recounts her parallel paths as one of the world's most prominent diplomats and jewelry collectors. As Museum of Arts and Design Chief Curator David Revere McFadden notes in his introduction, unlike that of a traditional collector, who often proceeds with specific goals in mind, "Secretary Albright's collection has grown organically over the years in response to the changing circumstances and opportunities of her life and career." Perhaps the first pin of significance she wore was the Theta Delta Xi fraternity pin of her future husband, Joe Albright, as an undergraduate at Wellesley in the 1950s; they were married (a not atypical) three days after graduation. Over their 23-year marriage, Albright recounts, she received many gifts of jewelry, although she did not purchase any herself. But newly divorced in 1983, and having raised three daughters, attained numerous higher degrees, and sat on the National Security Council, Albright recalls, "when my mind turned to jewelry or clothes, I thought less about the expectations of others and more about my own sense of identity and pride."

As a professor at Georgetown University in the early 1990s, Albright gave little thought to her attire. However, upon her Presidential appointment, former U.N. ambassador and colleague at Georgetown Jeane Kirkpatrick advised: "Lose the professor clothes." Albright stuck to a traditional wardrobe, but her love of pins—often dramatic and worn in concert—intensified, especially her core collection of Americana. In her rare free moments she began to frequent such boutiques as the Tiny Jewel Box in Washington, D.C., and the Pier Antiques Show in New York City. Her collection began to grow exponentially, as pins were gifted to her by other world leaders, and even thrust upon her on the street by fans. The collection has evolved into a truly democratic assemblage that features everything from Verdura, Tiffany, and Cartier to Carolee, Monet, and Trifari, and works by such artists as Carol Sarkisian, Mary Ehlers, and Iradj Moini.

Albright's pins have at times assisted the cause of diplomacy. As she recounts in *Read My Pins*, throughout history jewels have played a key role in shaping world affairs: from the spoils of ancient wars; to the jeweled badges of medieval knights; to pins worn in allegiance by conspirators during the English Civil War; to George Washington, who proudly wore a spectacular diamond eagle pin given to him by the French Navy. The world began to watch Albright's shoulder in the 1990s, when, after Saddam Hussein refused to comply with UN inspections and disclosure about Iraq's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, she publicly criticized him. The government-controlled Iraqi press responded with a poem, which addressed her among other things as an "unparalleled serpent." Scheduled to meet with Iraqi officials soon after, she donned a small pin from her collection: a reptile coiled around a branch, a tiny diamond hanging from its mouth. She didn't think much of it, but the press seized on it; when asked, Albright smiled and said it "was her way of sending a message." Later, trudging through the minefield of Middle East diplomacy, Albright often wore a dove pin given to her by Leah



Above: Meeting the press in Damascus, 1999. Is Syria ready to make peace? Not yet.

Right: This snake is far more beautiful than anything that slithers through the gardens of my farm in Virginia. Snake, Kenneth Jay Lane.

While in government, I thought first when selecting a pin about the utility it might have in diplomacy. This is because some figures are laden with meaning. The lion, for example, has been linked to power and the sun since the days of ancient Greece. Thus, Syria's formidable President Hafez al-Assad took considerable pride in the fact that his name means "lion" in Arabic. For our first meeting, I wore a lion pin, thinking it might put Assad in a forthcoming mood; it didn't.

The serpent, connected in my mind to Saddam Hussein, is often portrayed alongside a tree or, as on my pin, a branch. Together, the serpent and tree are considered symbols of life, fertility, and (because the snake sheds its skin) renewal and rebirth. The association has cultural and religious connotations dating all the way back

Opposite page: Lion, Kenneth Jay Lane.

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Rabin, widow of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. When displeased by the pace of peace negotiations, she often found cause to substitute a turtle, a snail—or a crab.

Albright soon felt pressure to strategically choose her pins to suit daily events and international meetings. One had to carefully consider the sensitivities of nations to certain iconography; she wore a lion pin, for example, hoping to appease Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, whose name means "lion" in Arabic (it didn't). In diplomatic gift exchanges, she gave eagle cuff links to male foreign ministers, and to women she presented a specially made eagle pin that she signed on the back. Albright is pleased at the exposure her collection has given the jewelry industry; she still actively collects jewels, and publicly supported the U.N. resolution introducing the Kimberley Process, which seeks to certify that diamonds are traded legitimately from the time they leave a mine until they reach the stores.

In 1999 Helen W. Drutt English, inspired by Albright's example, invited jewelers from around the world to create pins that would send messages of their own; the works of more than 60 artists from 16 countries, including Gijs Bakker and Helen Shirk, were featured in a touring exhibition, titled "Brooching it Diplomatically: A Tribute to Madeleine Albright." This latest book accompanies a traveling exhibition of Albright's own collection, titled "Read My Pins," which opened at New York's Museum of Arts and Design last fall. One wishes that her collection included more unique works by contemporary artists. However, Albright's book is a true delight; and the more than 200 photographs sate the reader's visual appetite, as does the detailed "Pindex" at the end. This honest, personal, and at turns humorous and touching memoir is a genuine illustration of the power of the jeweler to change the world.

What a thrill for metal artists that the renowned stateswoman, professor, and author has often chosen to convey her strongest diplomatic messages not only with words but with jewelry.

Kate Fogarty is associate editor of Metalsmith.

Jewelry for a Cause
Charitable Indulgence

BY ANDREA DINOTO

I SHOP, therefore I give. Such is the premise—apologies to Descartes—that drives the thriving and controversial field of cause marketing. The concept—tagged in philanthropic circles as "embedded giving" or "selfish giving"—designates a percentage of the purchase price of a particular item as a charitable donation. Cause marketers include major corporations like American Express, Starbucks, and The Gap, as well as nonprofit organizations, all of which link sales of product to a charity as an incentive to giving. Not surprisingly, jewelry has emerged as one of the more popular buy/give categories, one that turns a guilty shopping pleasure into conspicuous, i.e. wearable, virtue.

Not surprisingly, jewelry has emerged as one of the more popular buy/give categories, one that turns a guilty shopping pleasure into conspicuous, i.e. wearable, virtue.

The first piece of high-visibility cause jewelry was the yellow "LiveStrong" silicone wristband made famous by Lance Armstrong, the seven-time Tour de France winner and testicular cancer survivor. Armstrong launched the Lance Armstrong Foundation in 2004; it both promotes cancer awareness and raises money through the sales of the now-ubiquitous $1 LiveStrong wristband and other sports-related products, on its web site. Nike underwrote the cost and distribution of the first five million bands, which instantly sold out (a tribute more to the athlete's celebrity, perhaps, than pure altruism) with profits going to Armstrong's foundation.

While the LiveStrong wristband spawned myriad copycat charity-related wristbands, other forms of cause jewelry—pins, pendants, rings, and bracelets—are now available largely through online nonprofits which, in partnership with major charities, offer a diverse range of modestly priced fair-trade products. In 1999, the pioneering Seattle-based Greater Good Network launched The Hunger Site (one of sixteen web sites now subsumed under its banner) devoted to hunger-related and humanitarian causes, mainly in Africa. Since then, the web site reports, product sales have funded "more than 657 million cups of food" distributed through its three charitable partners: Mercy Corps, Feeding America, and Millennium Promise. The Hunger Site's popular glass bead Darfur bracelet (also available through Relief Beads, a nonprofit fund raiser for Relief International's humanitarian programs) is handmade by African women in refugee camps. Feedprojects.com, working through the auspices of the U.N.'s World Food Program, reaches hungry children through sales of their FEED 5 plastic bead bracelet, whose metal charm stamped "FEED" on one side and "5" on the other signifies the number of school meals the sale of each $15 bracelet will provide.

The web site Waves of Gratitude sells jewelry meant to symbolize the importance of "expressing gratitude" for early breast cancer detection and prevention. Three dollars from every purchase of their *Branches of Hope* pendant, made from sustainably harvested silver, is donated to the Get in Touch Foundation, aimed at both women and young girls.

Possibly the largest cause jewelry selection may be found at World of Good, whose web pages are powered by the global marketer eBay. The nonprofit presents itself as "the world's first online marketplace to convene thousands of People Positive and Eco Positive sellers and products all in one place." Click on any item and a profile of the charity or seller pops up so the buyer can see where her donation will go, an admirable feature.

Among the luxury jewelers, both Cartier and Bulgari have recently espoused cause marketing with singular designs that bespeak their exclusivity, albeit at relatively affordable prices. Since 2006, Cartier's *Love* charity bracelet—a "LOVE"-inscribed gold ring threaded on a silk and cotton cord—has raised more than $4.5 million for 24 global charities. For the 2009 version, produced in rose gold with a diamond, $150 is donated to charity from the sale

Assorted cause silicone wristbands

"Darfur Relief" glass bead bracelet

"Branches of Hope" pendant in sterling silver with Swarovski crystal, from Waves of Gratitude

Bulgari's sterling silver "Save the Children" ring

Cartier Love *charity bracelet in rose gold and silk cord with diamond*

of each $700 bracelet. In 2009 Bulgari celebrated its 125th anniversary by issuing a limited-edition silver ring inscribed outside with the Bulgari name and inside with the name of the 75-year-old philanthropic organization Save the Children. Sixty dollars from the sale of each $290 ring—promoted in celebrity-studded print ads—benefited Save the Children's "Rewrite the Future" campaign, aimed at providing educational opportunities for children in conflict-affected areas.

In 2008, *Modern Jeweler* magazine reported that many retail and independent jewelers had enthusiastically espoused the idea of charitable shopping by creating their own symbolic cause-related designs. "These jewelry pieces often emerge as part of fundraising events for charities the jewelers support in their communities," wrote Jeff Prine, executive editor.

What gives cause marketing a bad name is the hidden practice by some firms of marking up prices to both cover the percentage of the donation and increase sales, according to a University of Michigan study. Also, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to follow the money, as it were, to determine how much actually goes to the charity. Then there is the obvious question: Shouldn't people just give and not need to get rewarded for it? If you agree, the web site whatididnotbuy.com lets you donate the amount you might have spent on a non-essential item—a yacht? an iPod?—to a favorite charity. That leaves you with nothing to show for your giving but a halo—not a bad tradeoff, as jewelry goes.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York–based writer on art, craft, and design.

Furthermore
www.worldofgood.com
www.wavesofgratitude.com
www.love.cartier.com
www.thehungersite.com
www.feedprojects.org
www.livestrong.com
www.reliefbeads.org

On Display
Do No Harm

BY DONALD FRIEDLICH

THERE ARE MANY challenges in the display of artwork in general, and small works such as jewelry can present their own set of difficulties. Regrettably, the reality is that most artists usually have little or no control over how their work is shown. We must depend on the aesthetic judgments of gallery owners and curators who are often operating on limited budgets and under severe time constraints. Some are inventive, sensitive to the work, and do brilliantly, but others miss the mark.

I recently traveled to Europe for an exhibition of my work at Villa Bengel, in the German gem-cutting center of Idar-Oberstein. While the prospect of this exhibition was exciting, I was haunted by concerns about how my work would be displayed. Despite having been fortunate in my career to show with some excellent galleries, as well as in many museums, I've often found myself disappointed in the way my jewelry has been presented. I always go in hoping for the best, but by now I know this is not necessarily what I'll be greeted with. And I know I'm not alone in these feelings and frustrations.

The display at Villa Bengel was an example of what can happen when curators are able to mesh their unique aesthetic vision with that of the work being displayed. By using simple white pedestals and resting my pieces on colored paper that was vibrant and bold, yet used with restraint, curators Wilhelm Lindemann and Theo Smeets presented all the work with sensitivity. A harmonious synergy between my design sensibilities and their own was achieved.

The elation I feel when collaboration between artist and curator works well equals the disappointment I feel when it misses the mark. One of the most frequent problems I've run into is the one-size-fits-all display. For instance, the colorless clear and frosted brooches in my "Magnification Series" disappear when displayed on a white background. Yet repeatedly that's the precise environment in which they are shown. I have learned to be pre-emptive, enclosing notes asking that the work not be shown against white. "They die on white," I write, and yet, even at one of the leading multinational jewelry exhibits in Europe, I arrived in the hall to discover the work of all 70 international jewelers mounted on the same white fabric background. While it may seem that a uniform, monochromatic, and neutral background is a safe and expedient answer, the reality is that a one-size-fits-all display is, by its very nature, a flawed compromise. Even in the display of a solo show, some pieces will do well, while others will likely suffer. In a group exhibition it almost never works. In this case, my own work was, as I feared, the equivalent of a polar bear in a snowstorm.

I've often found myself disappointed in the way my jewelry has been presented. I always go in hoping for the best, but by now I know this is not necessarily what I'll be greeted with.

A display that is too crowded is another frequent problem, usually in galleries, but sometimes in museums as well. It's often the result of limited display space and perhaps a reticence to edit the quantity of work.

I recently had the opportunity to be a part of a beautiful international exhibition of glass jewelry that traveled to a number of museums abroad and domestically, and I was able to see it at three of its venues. The feeling and power of the show, as well as that of the individual objects, changed with each display. Two of the museums did first-rate installations, and the show sung; unfortunately, at the third, it died.

At the third venue, the display was much too crowded. The exhibition space allotted to the show was very small, which, perhaps, could not be helped. However, compounding this limitation was the fact that distracting props had been introduced that often overwhelmed the jewelry and amplified the crowding. One of my favorite pieces in the exhibition, a ring by Italian jeweler Annamaria Zanella, was half-buried in the props. A dynamic and masterful necklace from Wendy Ramshaw's "Picasso's Ladies" series laid lifeless in the display case.

In these situations, I always weigh the pros and cons of mentioning my concerns to the exhibition staff. I realize that my input will have no bearing on the present situation—that ship has sailed—but, I reason, it might make a difference to future

Installation view of the author's exhibition at Villa Bengel in Idar-Oberstein, Germany, 2009.

shows. On the other hand, I don't want to offend people who have, I know, worked long and hard on an exhibit. And certainly I don't wish to poison an important relationship and risk reducing the chance of a future exhibition opportunity.

At the European exhibit in which my work disappeared on white I said nothing. At the glass show, I spoke up. But, in both cases, I left thinking that there must be a way for exhibitors and artists to forge a working relationship that produces more consistently excellent results satisfying to both parties (and to the most important party: the viewer of these objects, the museumgoer, the gallery customer).

The Hippocratic Oath says something to the effect of, "First, do no harm." That seems like a good starting point for jewelry displays as well. Or, to quote the simple but sage words of one of my teachers, the late Jack Prip—words that have run through my head every time I see an exhibition—"Present your work to its best advantage."

Here are my Ten Commandments of jewelry display.

- Present the work to its best advantage.
- Keep it simple.
- The display should be unified, balanced, and shared in an egalitarian way between artists.
- The display should be appropriate to the work and adapted to the needs of each individual object.
- The work should be given room to breathe. The eye should have areas upon which to both focus and rest. Empty space is often an indication of how the objects are valued.
- Quality lighting is essential. If the lighting can be unobtrusive, all the better.
- Any display furniture or stands should be as discreet as possible.
- The work should be labeled clearly with the artist's name. Other pertinent information such as materials used, artist's biography, career highlights, and artist's statement should be easily available to the viewing public.
- In a sales venue, the objects should be quickly accessible to gallery personnel, but secure from theft and well protected from harm. The more quickly they can get the work into the customers' hands, the better for sales.
- For exhibitions of wearable objects where sales are hoped for, convenient and well-lighted mirrors should be provided.

Once a work of art leaves the artist's studio and ventures out into the world, the visions of others, whether curators, gallery staff, or other exhibitors, are necessarily imposed upon it. My hope is that these visions complement the artistic vision so that the ultimate viewer—the wearer, the critic, the supporters of our field—can best appreciate the work we do. Perhaps we can more frequently go well beyond the minimum standards and find engaging, dynamic, and innovative ways to present our work in the years to come.

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Furthermore
www.donaldfriedlich.com
www.jakob-bengel.de

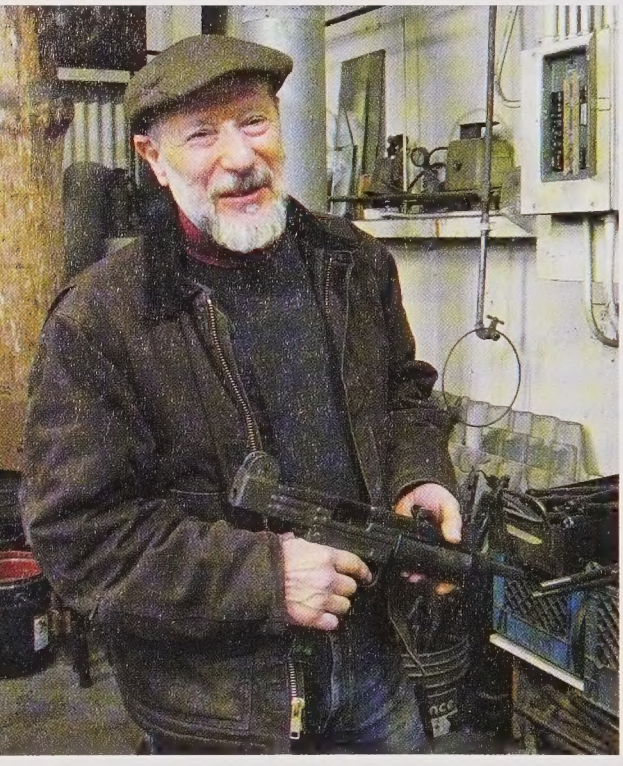
Al Farrow
The Peaceable Provocateur

BY JENNIFER CROSS GANS

AL FARROW BELIEVES that warfare and organized religion are intimately bound, and he has a passionate dislike for both of them. Yet one may find him in his 2,400-square-foot studio in San Rafael, a former candle factory, with a revolver or Uzi in his hand, or working on his extensive supply of bullets, thankfully deactivated. One could be forgiven for thinking one had strayed into a gun dealer's workshop instead of that of a sculptor and metalworker.

The artist is currently constructing a miniature mosque, three by five by four feet, which will weigh in at nearly a ton. At first sight it's architecturally realistic. But as one examines it more closely, one sees that several of the structural elements are guns of different kinds welded into the steel frame. The decorative "tiles" on roof or walls are shell casings, trimmed to fit and delicately patinaed.

It's a shock, and of course Farrow is delighted. He hates the way that so many people look, or don't look, at fine art. They will often glance at a gallery without going in, or if they do, spare no more than a moment or two on each piece, no matter if the work is excellent. He's spent many years working on techniques to lure an audience into a better appreciation of shape, form, color, and surface detail. Most importantly, he hopes people will begin to think about the messages underlying his current body of work.



The artist Al Farrow in his San Rafael, California studio with a gun from his collection.
PHOTO: JENNIFER CROSS GANS

Although not religious, Farrow, now in his sixties, grew up in Brooklyn with a strong social conscience. He managed to avoid military service, and joined anti-war demonstrations in Brooklyn, though he was discouraged by the limitations of public protest. He wanted to become an architect, but settled for pursuing a career as a structural designer. He then realized his life's mission had to be art.

With a minimum of formal academic education, Farrow acquired some impressive skills, refining his graphic talents, studying wood and metal sculpture both in New York and Marin County, becoming an expert in patinas, and even building and running a foundry within his San Rafael space (1978–89). In a small gallery above his studio, Farrow pointed out some of his achievements in ceramic shell casting, which he likes because it is inexpensive, and the shells can be fired at very high temperatures, enabling the artist to burn out the wax or other substances. Careful water-cooling freezes the surface shortly after the pour, forcing the shrinkage to occur inside the material. The process allows the creation of solid, thick castings with perfect, detailed surfaces. Surprisingly, the potential of this technique has rarely been tapped by commercial foundries.

"I continually challenge myself to make more complicated things."

Farrow's upstairs gallery also contains examples of his earlier work from the 1970s through the mid 1990s. These include fabricated metal portraits; a cast series of small, limited edition sculptures of beggars (1979–82); and elegant bronze dancers (1978–85), reminiscent of Degas or Rodin, with realistic details of shoes and leg warmers. These figures are true performers at work; Farrow himself studied dance during those years.

Two other bodies of work from this period reflect the artist's strong social conscience, and his emerging ironic talent, which draws sly but pointed attention to the violence in our culture. His African series of bronze statuettes (1984–88), cast in exquisite detail and often vividly patinaed, features figures unobtrusively equipped with weapons of death, perhaps a gun, or a miniature missile being used as a syringe. A quite different series of mock-Mimbres bowls in polyester resin, clay, and paint dates from 1992–93. They look like genuine antiques—until you notice the little hunters are equipped with mortar rockets.

It took three decades of experimentation for Farrow to unite his impressive talents in a manner that led to both artistic *and* commercial success. In the mid 1990s he traveled to Italy, visiting churches and

cathedrals, and viewing the local examples of so-called holy relics. He was both fascinated and disgusted by the sight of a withered finger bone in a silver and glass box; during the medieval period, saintly body parts were venerated, and the sale of indulgences contributed financially to much ecclesiastical architecture, including the Vatican. This sight reinforced his earlier beliefs that "too much pain has been caused by organized religion. I respect people's beliefs, but organized religion is all about money and control." And, alas, has fueled wars fought by a variety of religious fundamentalists.

Endeavoring to tweak the Pope's nose, Farrow began creating his own mixed media reliquaries, including human bones and elements of destruction such as chains or bullets. He even created a new faux saint, Santo Guerro. He rekindled his earlier interest in ecclesiastical architecture, and started researching and recreating designs based on medieval cathedrals. As an equal opportunity iconoclast, he designed mock (fundamentalist) churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques.

Finding the unusual materials Farrow needs takes thoughtful and discreet shopping among different gun dealers and military museums, besides trips to the Bone Room, a natural history store in Berkeley, the source for his bones and skulls. He added, "I don't rob graves and I don't kill people!" The most difficult part of each project is to select the most appropriate guns for the scale of the design. He then gives the plans for the piece to his two assistants, who begin working on the welded steel base and armature. Each building is different, but they all have to be decorated with many thousands of shell casings, which have to be trimmed to fit, sometimes filled with wood, squashed, and patinaed. Fortunately, one of his assistants, Alain Cuber, created special equipment to cut them down, reducing the labor involved in cutting a thousand bullets from two weeks to one hour. Almost no CAD is required; it's all hands, welders, sanders, drills, sprays, and epoxies. And Farrow is a perfectionist: any weld or seam that is the slightest bit sloppy will need to be redone.

Each major piece can take 18 months to 2 years to complete, and each one is different; meanwhile, there are bills to pay. Being a sculptor is a hard way to make a good living, especially since Farrow eschews regular teaching, commissions, and public projects. Fortunately he has become passionate about ethnographic art, particularly African, and has a sideline business restoring pieces for galleries and collectors. His study contains much of his impressive collection of tiny statuettes, rings, and bracelets, which he will sell or trade from time to time.

Today collectors, galleries, and museums are getting over the shock and awe of Farrow's work, honoring it with more group shows and exhibitions in such venues as the de Young Museum in San Francisco (2008). They recognize that his major gift is to tap into and express a powerful undercurrent of social distress, which isn't likely to abate any time soon. And he's not likely to run out of subjects, which keeps his enthusiasm high: "I continually challenge myself to make more complicated things," he said, as he works on a special twist for the mosque-in-process: how to create the impact of a bomb blast on the bullet-covered fiberglass dome. Ultimately, his work generates more questions than it does answers. "I am a provocateur," Farrow said, "and I basically leave people hanging at the end." ⓜ

The Spine and Tooth of Santo Guerro (detail) 2007
guns, bullets, steel, shot, glass, bone.
64 x 50 ½ x 74"
PHOTO: JOCK MCDONALD

Jennifer Cross Gans is a writer and studio artist based in San Francisco.

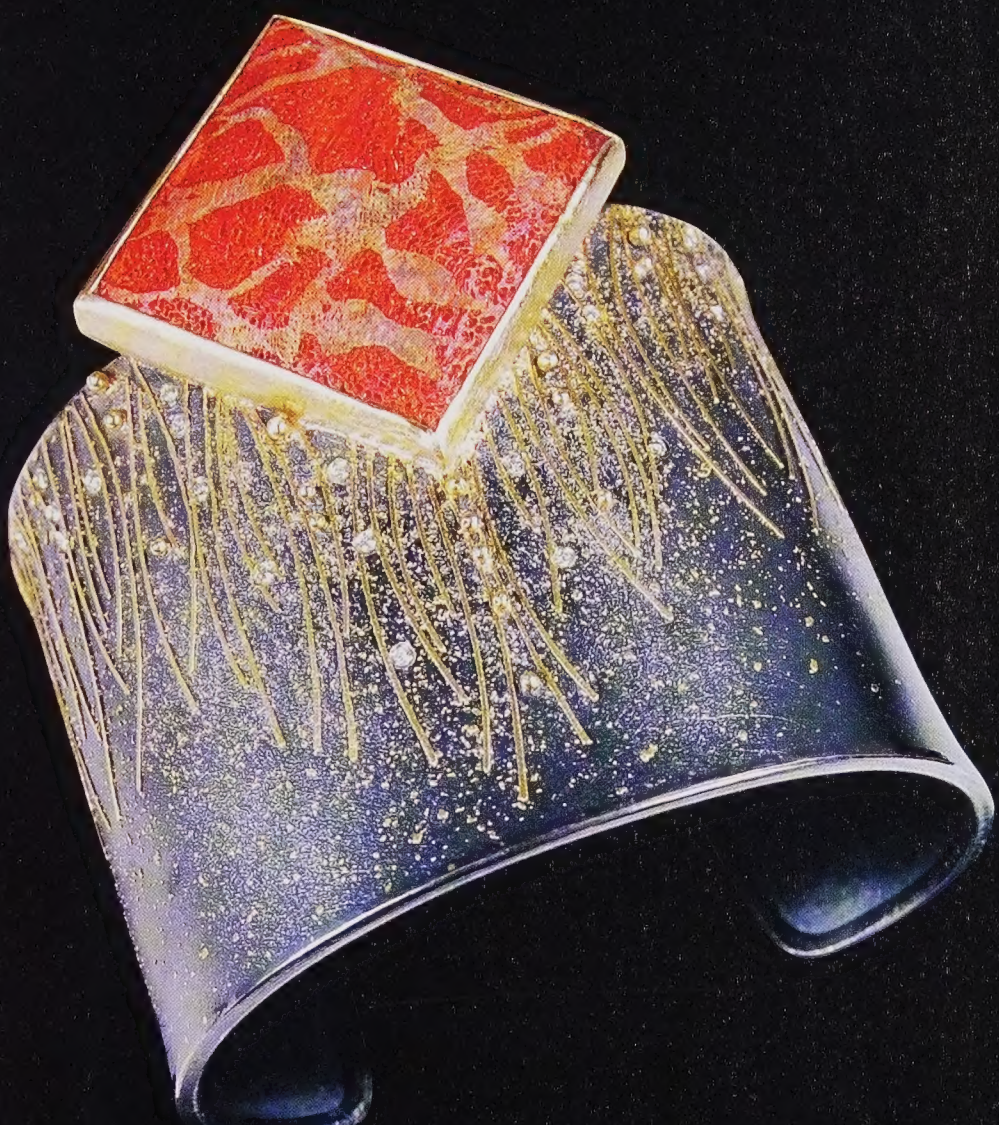
Furthermore
www.alfarrow.com
www.alfarrowcathedral.com

The Artful Opulence of Atelier Zobel

Bold Beauty

BY ANDREA DINOTO

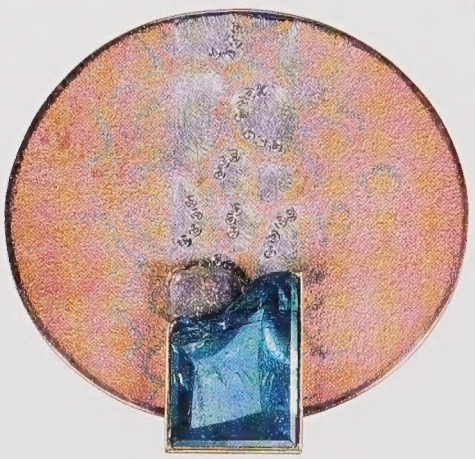
MICHAEL ZOBEL
Bracelet, 2006
silver, 22k and 24k gold, blue and champagne diamonds, Paraiba tourmalines
height 3"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL



MICHAEL ZOBEL
& PETER SCHMID
Bracelet, 2009
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, coral, champagne diamonds
height 3"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL

THE FRENCH TERM *ATELIER* can be defined simply as an artist's studio or workroom, but the original meaning is more nuanced, connoting a deeply rooted European tradition in which an art or craft is passed down from master to apprentice. In a true atelier, studio craftsmen turn out unique works of art in a style that fulfills the vision of the master. Atelier Zobel, founded in 1968 by the German goldsmith Michael Zobel in Konstanz, Germany, is just such a firm, known for bold, dramatic designs and a highly innovative, often painterly, approach to metalwork. As the firm enters its fifth decade, ownership has passed to Peter Schmid, a 37-year-old goldsmith who apprenticed to Michael Zobel for more than 15 years and who, at Zobel's invitation, bought the business in 2005. But, as Schmid is quick to state, Zobel "still designs in an advisory capacity." Which is not to say that Zobel, an exuberant, larger-than-life personality, will be kicking back any time soon. Immediately following the August 2009 opening of an Atelier Zobel exhibition at Patina Gallery in Santa Fe, he left to sail the Mediterranean with friends on a two-masted yacht, then headed to Central Asia for an exhibition he organized in conjunction with a UNESCO-sponsored Silk Road project.[1] Ivan Barnett, co-owner of Patina, describes Zobel as a "huge, intense person…a young man inside a 67-year-old body." Barnett has known Zobel since 2001, when the gallery first began to represent him, and has since presented seven exhibitions of his work. Pressed to describe Zobel's style, Barnett emits a string of superlatives: "Intriguing, daring, interesting, subtle, beautiful, elegant, sometimes shocking…[having] all the things a great painting might have…almost always ergonomically worked out." One must add "exotic," because Zobel's richly colored and patterned design esthetic has grown out of a cosmopolitan upbringing, albeit one wedded to a German sensibility. A Zobel jewel, no matter how oversized, is always functional. Says Zobel, expressing a view antithetical to that of many of today's conceptual jewelers: "If you cannot wear it, forget it."

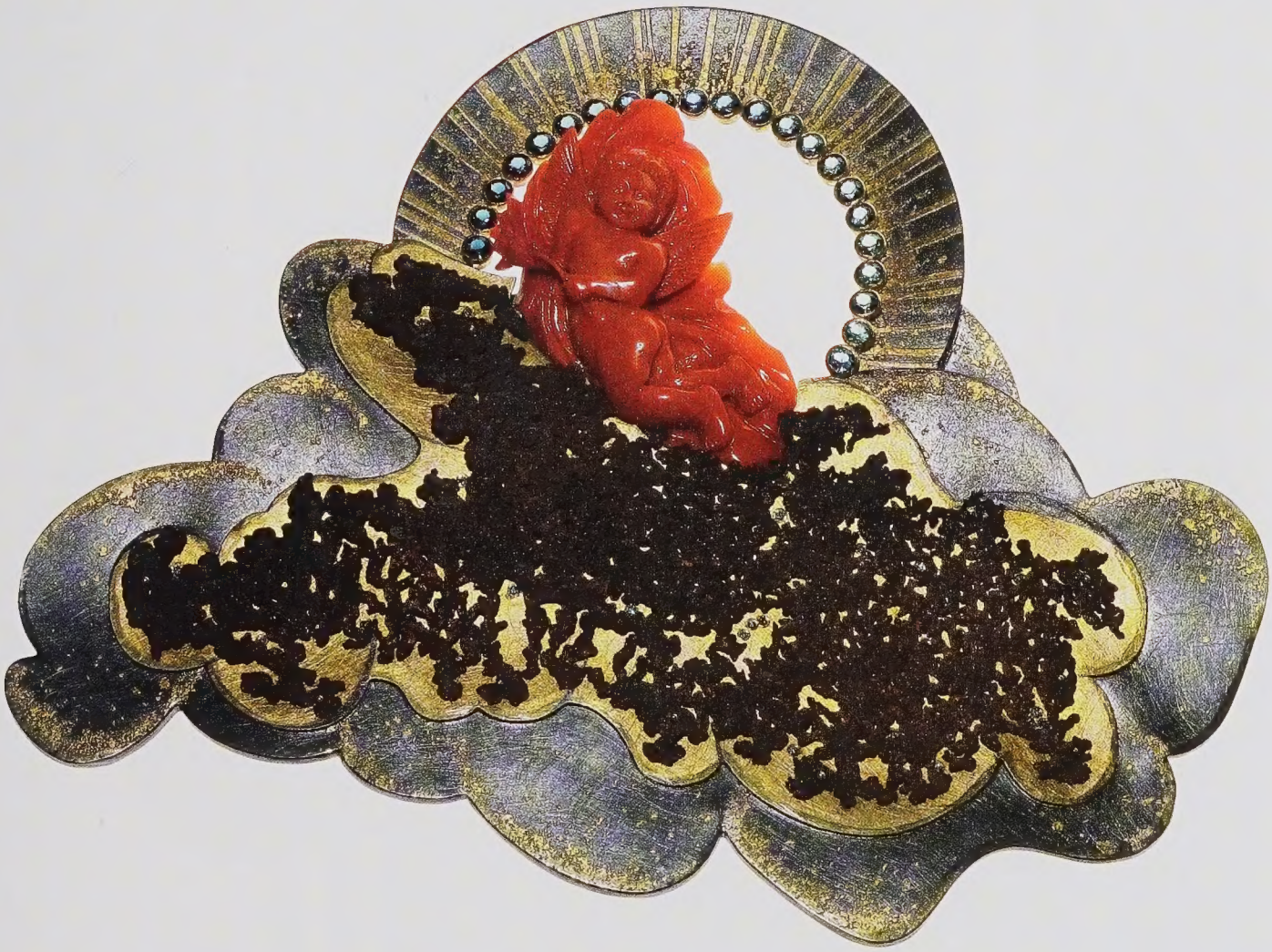
MICHAEL ZOBEL
Bracelet, 2003
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, rutilated quartz cut by Munsteiner Atelier, champagne diamonds
width 2 ¾"
COLLECTION THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS



MICHAEL ZOBEL
Brooch/Pendant, 2008
18k rose gold, platinum, aquamarine, rough diamond, champagne diamonds
diameter 2 ½"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

Michael Zobel was born in 1942 in Tangier, Morocco, his parents having emigrated there from Germany during World War II. Soon after, Zobel's father, who worked in advertising, moved the family to Barcelona, where Michael was raised until age 17. "I was impressed by Gaudí and by Picasso and all the modern Spanish artists," he says, referring as well to Joan Miró and Eduardo Chillida, both of whom he later met. Zobel's plans to become an artist, though, were discouraged by his father, who felt the field to be "too insecure." Instead, he proposed his son take up goldsmithing, an idea that Zobel initially rejected on the grounds that he "thought it too boring" to work with classic jewelry. But after a detour into architecture, Zobel ultimately enrolled in the Kunst- und Werkschule in Pforzheim, Germany, where he studied under Klaus Ullrich from 1958 to 1961. Ullrich taught a new, free-form approach to metalwork, in which fusion, rather than solder, produced controllable "accidental" effects, therefore incorporating process as a graphic element.[2] For Zobel, this life-changing experience led him to his true métier. After completing his course of study with Ullrich, Zobel was urged by his father to go to France and learn the language, thereby burnishing his cosmopolitan credentials. (He is fluent in four languages.) "It was not easy for a German to go to France," Zobel recalls, this soon after wartime Nazi occupation, but he took his father's advice and found a job as a designer with Paris jeweler Henri Denys, who had a workshop north of the city. "I was 23 or 24 and spent every weekend in Paris," Zobel says, relishing a memory of the "crazy years," the time of "[the Russian poet] Yevtushenko, Woodstock, the Beatles." Zobel met his wife Annick in France, with whom he had two daughters. (One now works for the Swedish fashion collective Acne, which recently commissioned a line of Zobel jewelry.)

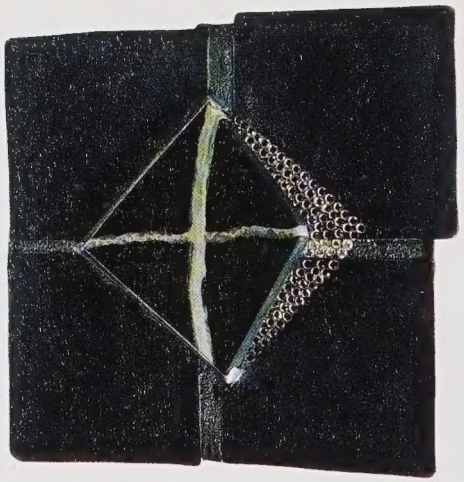
A Zobel jewel, no matter how oversized, is always functional. Says Zobel, expressing a view antithetical to that of many of today's conceptual jewelers: "If you cannot wear it, forget it."



PETER SCHMID
Pendant, 2006
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, copper, coral, tourmalines, blue diamonds
6 ¾ x 5 ⅛"
PHOTO: CARLES ROIG

PETER SCHMID
Necklace, 2008
sterling silver, gold, platinum, champagne diamonds, moonstone cut by Munsteiner Atelier
length 17"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

PETER SCHMID
Earrings, 2008
steling silver, 18k gold, platinum, diamond surfaces, champagne and black diamonds
1 ⅛ x 5 ⅜"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS



Top: PETER SCHMID
Brooch/Pendant, 2008
sterling silver pebble, black and champagne diamonds
3 3/8 x 3 1/2"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

MICHAEL ZOBEL
Brooch/Pendant, 2002
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, platinum, rose quartz, champagne diamonds
2 3/4 x 2 3/4"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

With the establishment of his own workshop in Konstanz in 1968, Zobel began to meld the fusion techniques learned from Ullrich with his own design concepts, resulting in a unique type of jewelry. Experimentation was in the air as the "New Jewelry" movement took hold in Europe. Asked how his particular style developed, Zobel states simply, "What you see normally I thought boring [and thought it] would be wonderful to do something else." Zobel's "something else" is often high drama, in which splashes, streaks, and patterns of varicolored gold and platinum are fused to oxidized silver in much the same way that paint is applied to canvas. In fact, Zobel's color effects have been compared to the gilded paintings of Gustav Klimt. Patricia Faber of the Aaron Faber Gallery in New York believes that Zobel's unique achievement of a textured, painterly surface is what "set Michael apart." At the time, she says, "[fusion] was a technique that nobody else was doing."

Throughout the '70s and '80s, Zobel exhibited in Europe and won several design awards. He began to achieve a following in the U.S. largely through the Faber gallery, which presented him in a group show of European jewelers in 1989. For the exhibition catalogue Faber wrote that Zobel "creates a perceptible dialogue between concept and metal in which the material asserts itself and its properties while remaining a medium for form, color, and concept." In the same show, Faber spotlighted the work of Bernd Munsteiner, an avant-garde gem cutter and Zobel's contemporary, who had also studied under Ullrich in Pforzheim. Born into a lapidary family, Munsteiner employed revolutionary reverse-cut techniques that departed from the classic faceting in favor of asymmetrical, optical sculptures that sometimes left parts of a stone rough and unpolished. Zobel began to incorporate Munsteiner's unusual, often oversize stones in his large-scale pieces, particularly the massive cuffs worked in multiple metals, which have become his signature form. To this day, Atelier Zobel makes richly creative use of colored stones from Atelier Munsteiner, as well as from other modernist gem cutters, including the Hochstrasser brothers of Switzerland, and Phillip Becker of Idar-Oberstein, Germany, all of whom have transformed a once fairly predictable field. Zobel also embraced the incorporation of non-precious materials in important jewelry, and to this day anything from ancient glass, Saharan wood, blood-red coral, ebony, and lava, might be found combined with his organic metalwork to produce fascinating and unexpected collages.

All of these ideas and approaches to design continue to inform the work of Atelier Zobel today. As Peter Schmid segues into leadership of the firm, he has begun producing his own pieces, but, he says, "My designs are in the Zobel language." Assuredly, the creation of a Zobel jewel is still largely a collaborative effort between Michael and Peter that begins with a drawing on paper with dimensions of the piece, a bit of description, and an indication of the central stone. The design is then handed off to one of the atelier's three major goldsmiths who, as Schmid puts it, "build it up into a Zobel piece." Often, he says, "the interpretation of the goldsmith is a little different than the idea, which I like very much," as it makes for an open attitude and "very creative work." As Schmid describes the workroom atmosphere, "the process is fairly informal and there is a lot of feedback" as the jewelers work with a table full of gemstones that function as a watercolor palette, "except the gemstones are cut in all different ways, and you see what works."

In the actual fabrication of a Zobel piece, the first step is fusion, an exacting layering process in which the trick is to retain the integrity of the metals—high-karat gold, silver, and/or platinum—as they bond under high heat. Schmid explains that if the heat—applied by a mouth-blown torch, an age-old technique—is not reduced at exactly the right moment, the metals will fuse into one alloy. "You do it by eye," he says, "by looking...by experience." Schmid's apprenticeship to Zobel, as well as his design training—he is a graduate of the Fachhochschule für Design in Schwäbisch Gmünd—serves him well, not only as proprietor of the atelier, but as a

MICHAEL ZOBEL
Brooch/Pendant, 2007
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, amber, light yellow diamond, rough diamonds
4 x 3 ½ x 1 ½"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

Anything from ancient glass, Saharan wood, blood-red coral, ebony, and lava, might be found combined with his organic metalwork to produce fascinating and unexpected collages.

By remaining true to its aesthetic principles, Atelier Zobel, a firm that virtually defined the new wave in European jewelry in the '60s, continues to astonish and endure.

MICHAEL ZOBEL
Bracelet, 2002
18k red gold, platinum, rubelite, champagne and black diamonds
width 2 3/8"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

PETER SCHMID
Brooch/Pendant, 2005
oxidized silver, 18k and 24k gold, champagne diamonds
1 5/8 x 3 1/8"
PHOTO: BILL SANDOVAL

designer in his own right. While the majority of pieces now produced by the atelier are still the result of collaboration, Schmid has begun to produce his own one-of-a-kind pieces, which, while retaining the characteristic Zobel scale and drama, display his distinctive personal style. Schmid's pieces often surprise by their wearability, also the case with much Zobel jewelry. In the introduction to a planned book on Atelier Zobel, Ursula Ilse-Neuman, curator at the Museum of Arts and Design, writes of Schmid: "...he has imprinted his own sensibility on the Zobel look with forms that tend to be more sculptural, or even architectural, and which add a new dimension to the studio's design vocabulary." In another extravagant concept, Schmid added long fringes of tumbled black diamonds to a pair of blackened silver and platinum earrings that prove to be lightweight and comfortable when worn. Sue Schmid, Peter's wife and partner in the new enterprise (herself a trained goldsmith with a master's degree in art history), points out that all pieces are engineered to "work with the body in a surprising way." Rings follow the form of the knuckle, while earrings—even the flamboyant diamond fringes—gracefully conform to the curve of the face.

Atelier Zobel has long attracted an international clientele that includes celebrities, socialites, and royalty, but, as Sue Schmid comments, "people interested in our work tend to be very strong and independent, of bold character... some are CEOs, some work in a bookstore, but everybody appreciates the quality of the pieces." Both the daring—and unorthodox—use of stones, coupled with the high-ticket prices for some items (a $60,000 rubelite and diamond cuff, for example) place Atelier Zobel in a unique position within the contemporary art jewelry world, in which the "decorative" and the "conceptual" now occupy almost warring camps. Operating well above the fray, Zobel continues to elicit passionate responses from customers and collectors, while commanding respect among peers for timeless design. By remaining true to its aesthetic principles, Atelier Zobel, a firm that virtually defined the new wave in European jewelry in the '60s, continues to astonish and endure.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York–based writer on art and design.

Furthermore
www.atelierzobel.com
www.patina-gallery.com
www.aaronfaber.com

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1. In September 2003, Michael Zobel was awarded an honorary professorship of the National University for Architecture, Construction and Transport in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. He has contributed to the international UNESCO-supported project Great Silk Road East–West Dialogue, which organizes exhibitions in different cities of Asia and Europe.
2. Charles Lewton-Brain, "Where Fold-Forming Came From," www.Ganoksin.com. Lewton-Brain discusses his experience with Klaus Ullrich in Germany in 1980–81. "This was against all the traditions in the field in Europe and was possibly a reflection of Pollock and other painters who chose the marks of process as compositional elements. Anyway as normal as fusing now seems it had shaken the scene in the 50s."

MICHAEL ZOBEL
Ring, 2008
18k gold, platinum, full opal, diamond drop fancy orange, golden beryl Spirit Sun cut by Munsteiner Atelier, champagne diamonds
top width 1 ½"

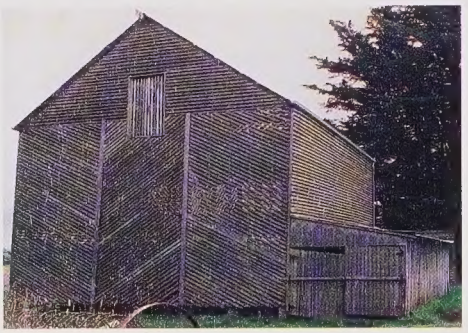
PETER SCHMID
Ring, 2009
18k rose gold, pure gold, tourmaline cut by Phillip Becker, pink and champagne diamonds
top width 1 ⅜"
PHOTO: FRED THOMAS

Marian Hosking
Nature into Culture

BY MARJORIE SIMON

Western Australia Leaf Litter Vessel, 2009
chemically blackened sterling silver
6 1/8 x 5"
PHOTO: GREG WALLIS

MARIAN HOSKING IS A MAKER of ethereal objects and a tireless teacher, researcher, and advocate for Australian jewelry and craft. Named in 2003 as one of the first three "Living Treasures" of Australian craft, she recently earned her Ph.D. at Monash University in Melbourne. The subject of her doctoral dissertation is ostensibly her own work practice, but it happens to address most of the salient themes of contemporary fine craft: "representation, allusion and motif; collection and display; advocacy and social purpose in craft work."[1] Hosking is never didactic, always illuminating; a colleague observes that "investigations of globalization, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, post-feminism, the uncanny, the abject, the sublime and the hyper-real are all to be found in the interstices between her practice and contemporary culture."[2] A maker for more than 40 years, Hosking engages with the natural environment wherever she goes, noting botanical forms, then drawing and reinterpreting them as jewelry. But she reserves her most eloquent observations for Australia writ large and small: the idiosyncratic variety of its flora and fauna, the rough beauty of ordinary farm buildings, the colonial collision with its Aboriginal peoples, and the hypnotic patterns of their art. And always, she returns to the agency of the human hand in object-making.



Bean drying shed, near Orbost, Victoria, Australia
PHOTO: MARIAN HOSKING

Vessel (Nambrok Barn), 1997
silver
4 1/8 x 4 3/4 x 2"
PHOTO: ISAMU SAWA

A maker for more than 40 years, Hosking engages with the natural environment wherever she goes, noting botanical forms, then drawing and reinterpreting them as jewelry.

The deep roots of Hosking's work lie in the period following the Age of Enlightenment, a time not only of empire and colonial domination, but of rapidly growing scientific discovery. In 1770 James Cook surveyed the eastern coast of "New Holland," claiming it for Great Britain, and naming the area New South Wales. At the time, taking (colonial) possession of the undocumented, un-Western, and therefore savage landscape was a way of dominating that landscape and bringing it under human control. Assembling detailed field drawings into books also contributed to the notion of transforming the natural to cultural. Scientific wonders, culled from exotic locales around the globe, were gathered in rooms, and later into organized displays, known as Cabinets of Curiosities (*wunderkammers*). Hosking consciously references all these activities and values in her jewelry collections and their installations. She also honors the efforts of colonial women who, barred from attending art academies, were nonetheless encouraged to draw and paint. Botanical illustration, with the aim of exact, i.e. rational, reproductions of nature, became an acceptable sphere of women's activity in the Victorian period, as exemplified by Tasmanian illustrator Mary Morton Allport (1806–96), a skilled lithographer, etcher, and engraver who is considered Australia's first professional woman artist.

The extraordinary sympathy between Australia and Great Britain tends to obscure the fact of their quite distinct geographies: the former lies in the south Pacific Ocean, only 500 miles from Papua, New Guinea. One way that Hosking, a fourth-generation descendant of British colonials from the gold rush days of the mid nineteenth century, came to terms with this conundrum was to leave home and explore the world, a process she believes essential to one's education and growth. After graduating from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (now RMIT University) she traveled to California, London, and Barcelona, settling in Pforzheim, Germany at the Fachhochschule für Gestaltung, then as now, a center for jewelry innovation. In the heady days of the early 1970s she worked for Klaus Ullrich and studied with the great Reinhold Reiling. On returning to Australia in 1975, Hosking took a teaching position in the city of Wagga Wagga, New South Wales. Living there after Pforzheim "and trying to develop my own language of making, I moved away from the simple modulation of hollow geometric silver forms to selecting fragments of the landscape that I was living in and traveling through each day."[3] Now residing in Melbourne, Hosking is Head of

From front:
Desert Acacia (brooch), 2010
sterling silver
2 5/8 x 2 5/8 x 3/8"
Desert Hakea (brooch), 2010
sterling silver
6 7/8 x 3 x 3/4"
Sturt Devil Pea (brooch), 2010
sterling silver
1 3/8 x 2 5/8 x 3/8"
PHOTO: GREG WALLIS

Coast Banksia (brooch), 2010
heat and chemically colored sterling silver
5 x 4 ½ x ⅜"
Banksia (brooch), 2009
heat and chemically colored sterling silver
4 ¾ x 2 ⅛ x ⅛"
set on Hosking's sketch book drawing of Banksia plant
PHOTO: GREG WALLIS

Somewhere along a continuum from representation (mimesis) to abstraction, Hosking takes control of the image and idea, the way a photographer or filmmaker controls access to a larger picture.

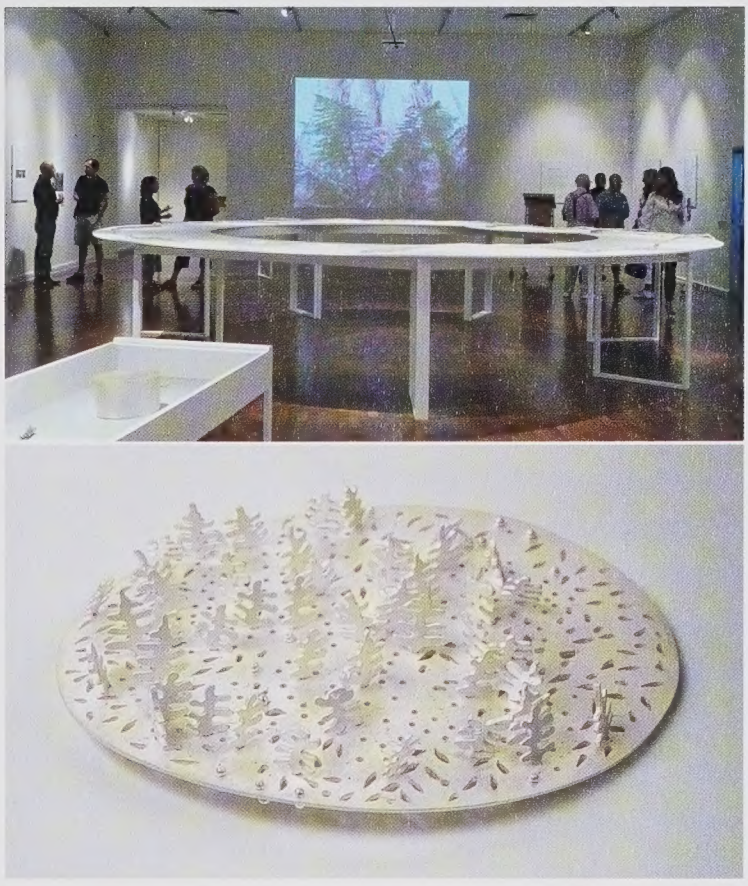
Metals and Jewellery at Monash University, while engaging in professional activities such as lecturing, curating, and exhibiting throughout Asia and Europe.

To an outsider, Hosking's work appears characteristically Australian in its interpretations of indigenous plants, materials, and artifacts. And Hosking states outright, "I am strongly grounded in the Australian context."[4] Like a naturalist of Darwin's age, she is a spirited observer and collector. Many of us who would scarcely know a kookaburra from a gum tree respond to her many interpretations of eucalypts, because they are so tenderly and knowingly reproduced. In a traveling exhibition in 2007 and 2008, Hosking identified the sources of her specimens as arising from "three distinct landscapes: arid regions, Sydney heathland and Grippsland forest."[5] As a design theme, botanicals are a completely renewable resource, and Australia's unique biota has inspired a range of creations from the banal "gum leaf" jewelry of the 1970s to the sublime copper vessels of visiting American metalsmith Helen Shirk. Australians such as Julie Blyfield and Margaret West, and New Zealander Warwick Freeman routinely draw on the area's ecological diversity and specificity. Blyfield plumbs the variety of leafy plant forms, while Freeman and West treat shells and rocks with poetic simplicity. Hosking shares with West and Blyfield a connection to representational flora, but she contextualizes them within the Victorian-era motifs that are the formal antecedents of Australian jewelry.

Hosking consciously references Aboriginal jewelry in her collecting from specific locations, and her use of repetition and patterns. It's partly a response to the material environment and partly acknowledgement of the power of the images. But it's the totality of the pattern that interests her, not appropriation of Aboriginal design motifs per se. Specifically, the discontinuities or irregularities in any pattern attract her attention, and affirm life in the shifts in repetition. By drawing from life (field inquiry), and carefully displaying the work as if in a *wunderkammer*, Hosking directs "the gaze of the viewer to the way in which representation, collection and display forces us to consider the relationship between objects, and the way made objects allude to things in the real world, through the medium of representation."[6]

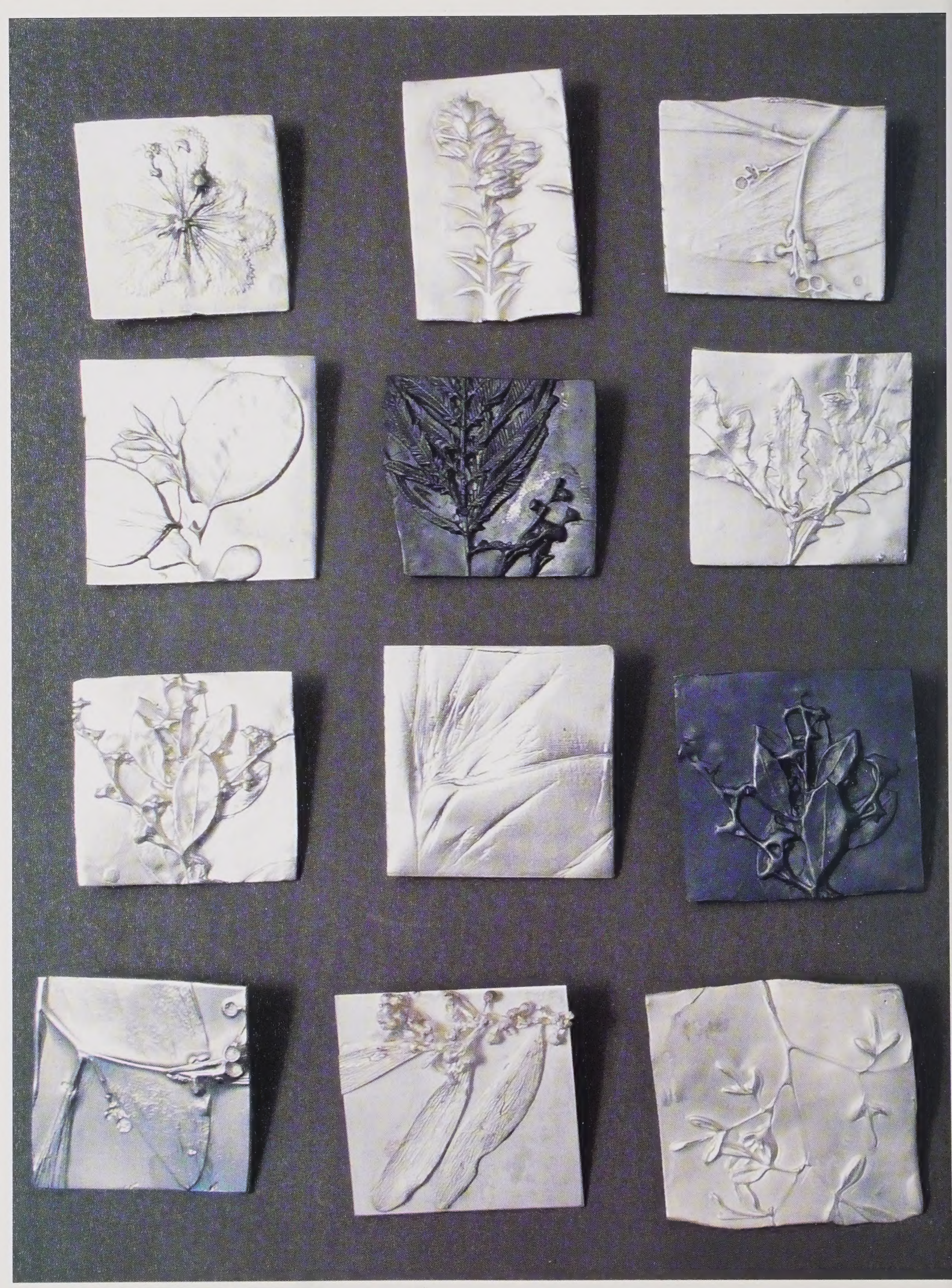
Somewhere along a continuum from representation (mimesis) to abstraction, Hosking takes control of the image and idea, the way a photographer or filmmaker controls access to a larger picture. Even something that *appears* to be completely mimetic, such as a Buchan fern brooch, actually selects out a portion for us to see. Because of the tendency of the human mind to complete a (familiar) object, "a partial object can.... stand in for something that is not—or is no longer-present and available."[7] Some patterns emerge from the natural environment, such as light and dark mottling of trees, leaves, or dappled sunlight. Others are taken from copyright-free pattern books and are enlarged or reduced with a photocopier. "Interruption of the viewer's assumptions is one of the principal intentions of my work," Hosking says.[8]

Like many who value handwork, Hosking loves to drill and saw, seeing in the saw blades' "marks" the graphic



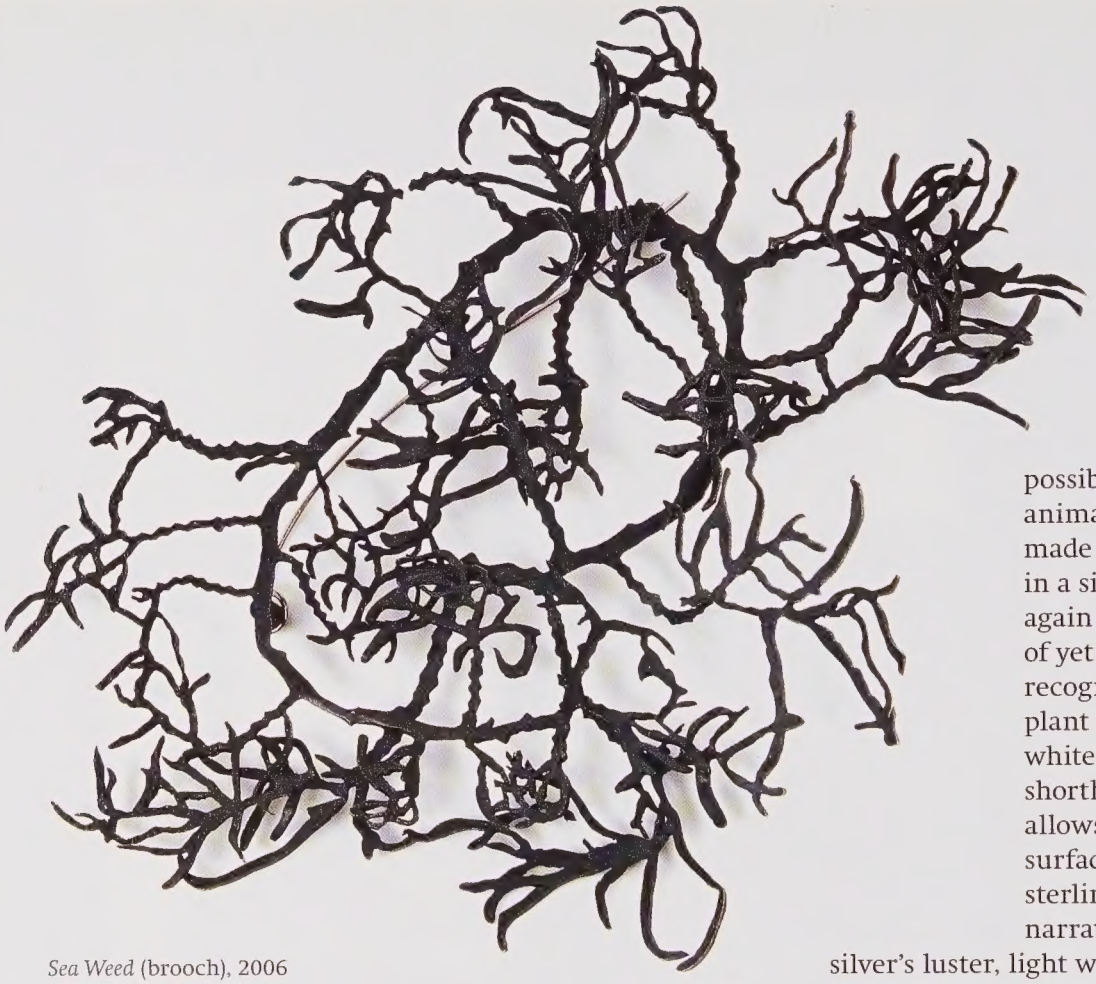
Top: *Installation view of "Marian Hosking: Jewellery" at The Jam Factory Centre for Craft and Design, Adelaide 2009. With tall tree silver ribbon (forground), and projection of DVD by Claudia Terstappen and Greg Wallis*
PHOTO: MARIAN HOSKING

Tree Leaves (brooch), 2001
sterling silver
diameter 2 ½"
PHOTO: JULIAN HUTCHENS



Gifts for Friends of Devilbend, from installation at "A Changing Land: Devilbend 2009," Sample of the small silver brooches, impressions of indigenous plants collected at the parksterling silver, chemically blackened each approx. 1 ⅛ x 1 ⅛"
PHOTO: MARIAN HOSKING

Installation at "A Changing Land: Devilbend 2009," at Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria, Australia. Photograph from Devilbend State Park with over 60 silver brooches and rings gifted to Friends of Devilbend who volunteered time to remove weeds and plant indigenous species to restore the park.
PHOTO: MARIAN HOSKING



Sea Weed (brooch), 2006
chemically blackened
sterling silver
3 ½ x 5 x ⅜"
PHOTO: GREG WALLIS

possibilities of line. Small variations animate the lines and recall the hand that made them. A pattern or design is repeated in a single piece, or in a series, overlapping again and again, until it becomes part of yet another pattern. Australians may recognize the lifelike eucalypts or other plant species; for others, the lacy black or white shadows are "simply" evocative floral shorthand. Layering the skeletal forms allows light to play off the interrupted surfaces. By choosing to work mainly in sterling silver, she avoids the political narrative of gold, and takes advantage of silver's luster, light weight, and workability. Using a muted palette, she explores a range of tones between chalky white neutrality and steely blackness with browns and grays in between. Whether identifiable or not, the forms read as plants from a dry continent.

Simple traditional tools and techniques serve Hosking well, such as heat coloring silver through its range of subtle grey to black oxidation. Yet she also welcomes technological assistance, such as new silicone molds. She creates many of her small brooches by making silicone molds of actual pieces of bark or burned detritus of bush fires, then casting silver elements from them. If it is a plant form, its original habitat is referenced, she says; "a memory and a memorial to a particular place, landscape, or environment."[9] In the last decade, Hosking has literally copied plant forms, but her surface treatment—"framing," leaving the form in relief as if making a plaster cast, silhouetting the form, blackening it, or leaving it frosted silver from the casting—reflects human intervention.

Hosking's work tends to be flat, and light and shadow are key design elements. Even the vessels are graphic. Rather than about building form in space; they are about light and shade. Perforated repetitively like a membrane, they are about the "idea" of form, not the bulk of "taking up" space. The vessels referencing sheds and houses are made of planes and the shadow brooches are constructed of flat layering. Compressing a commentary on colonialism into a few deft lines, Hosking addresses the symbolism of the swan in Australia's colonial history in the brooch *Black Swan White Swan* (2003). Early visitors to Australia, familiar with only the white swans of Great Britain, were shocked to discover these "alien" black swans. By literally mirroring line

"Interruption of the viewer's assumptions is one of the principal intentions of my work."

Black Swan/White Swan (brooch), 2003
chemically blackened sterling silver
4 ¾ x 4 ⅜"

drawings in blackened silver, Hosking selects a single item that unites and confounds our cultural expectations. In numerous other brooches, the silhouetted layers of flora and fauna mimic shadows on a rock and interpolate the play of light and form. It is almost as if the binary palette recreates the brilliant light of the desert at midday, and then picks out the shadows as the sun moves across the sky.

Hosking tirelessly collects local flora without hierarchy, stockpiling samples, specimens, and images for future divination. She not only valorizes the commonplace, but records its vanishing, so that it can be entrusted to human memory. In 2005, Hosking learned of the discovery of one of the last tall trees in Victoria, a possibly 600-year-old Errinundra Shining Gum tree. She and two colleagues took impressions of the tree's 20-meter circumference on strips of pink jeweler's wax, which were later cast in sterling silver and assembled into a ribbon for installation in an urban gallery. A band of cast silver describes the profile of the tree's girth, suspended on a custom-built circular table, and a DVD of Hosking making the wax impression accompanied the installation. By recreating patterns found in nature, Hosking foregrounds a human presence, and our ability and desire to abstract, to highlight and to notice. Even the process of lost wax casting relates to the loss of the tree—lost wax, lost tree—showing where the tree might have been, and the empty space it will leave. Her work returns us again and again to this interdependence.

Hosking and her work are a combination of particularity and universality grounded in her native land. Without her emphasis on human endeavor she might have been a painter, photographer, or large-scale sculptor. Instead, she fabricates three-dimensional metal objects whose frame of reference is not the vast geological landscape, but the human body. To this end, she is particularly fond of the brooch, which makes a display of the entire torso. Hosking's sizable layered silhouettes expand the domain of the mundane, giving them a new importance. Yet they remain light and airy by virtue of linear quality and the space between the lines. Simplifying the structure through silhouettes, Hosking relies on the essential form to communicate. "My brooches are always a segment—I avoid a horizon—a small fragment of something larger," she says.[10]

Marian Hosking disproves the notion that a sense of wonder is impossible in the digital age. An assortment of her "sketches" in the form of brooches has the cluttered grace of the *wunderkammer* or personal souvenir with the immediacy of the Discovery Channel. Nowhere is this synthesis more evident than in installations using a backdrop of one of Hosking's large photographs. The fragments Hosking selects for her attention and ours allow us, as one critic wrote, "a rare return to the original wonder of nature....such as our first encounter with snow, sight of blossom or glimpse of the ocean."[11]

Marjorie Simon is a jeweler and writer based in Philadelphia.

Furthermore
www.marianhosking.com.au
www.charonkransenarts.com
www.galleryfunaki.com.au

1. Marian Hosking, dissertation abstract, *Crafting and Meaning. Allusion, Motif and Identity in Australian Jewellery and Small-scale Silver Objects: A Studio-based Exploration.* (University of Melbourne, Victoria, 2008).
2. Kit Wise in Kit Wise and Claudia Terstappen, *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, (NSW, Australia: Object: Australian Center for Craft and Design, 2007), p. 31.
3. Interview by Claudia Terstappen in *Marian Hosking: Jewellery*, p. 76.
4. Hosking, op cit., p. 7.
5. Wise, op. cit., p. 32.
6. Hosking, op. cit., p. 41.
7. Ibid, p. 56.
8. Ibid. p. 22
9. Ibid., p. 24
10. Hosking, op. cit., p. 23.
11. Kit Wise, Gallery Funaki http://www.galleryfunaki.com.au/gf/exhibitions/84/silver-and-small-blocks.

From Amulet to Tumor The Jewelry of Disease

BY PATRICIA HARRIS AND DAVID LYON

ATHLEEN W. KENNEDY
Dis-Ease I, 2008
opper, enamel, silk
x 2 x 5"
HOTOS: MICHELLE LYON
ON MODEL)/TAYLOR DABNEY

DISEASE IS IN the air—and not just the sneeze-propelled spores of the latest cross-species influenza virus. A striking number of metalsmiths seem to be playing medical examiner (or coroner) these days as they embrace themes related to illness, disease, and pathologies of the body. Jewelry and disease, of course, have a long relationship, but historically, precious objects have been agents in the battle against dysfunction. Protective amulets appear in the earliest known human burials. And the tradition of the ex-voto—payment for a karmic medical bill—is alive and well in Latin American folk practices of offering *milagros* to saints so that they will intercede in everything from a broken leg to gout. Amulets and ex-votos either ward off disease and dysfunction, or thank the powers that be for deliverance from harm. By tradition, pieces of jewelry muster magic against potential calamity.

Alas, we no longer live in an animistic world that places all its faith in amulets and ex-votos. We are surrounded by a host of threats real and perceived: terrorism, economic collapse, flu epidemics, cancer, street criminals, killer asteroids.... Recent estimates suggest that six million American adults suffer from General Anxiety Disorder; the rest of us are just a little panicky now and then. That sour Dane, Søren Kierkegaard, would have said that we all have "sickness unto death," or despair.

Pop culture responds to free-floating anxiety with remarkable efficiency. The art world is not immune to the zeitgeist either. In our nervous age, it is not surprising that metalsmiths would respond to visceral threats directed at the body. But they are not only making protective amulets. Instead, they are exploring the taxonomy of tumors, the descriptors of disease, and the illustrations of illness. The resulting work is provocative and confrontational. The real question, though, is whether the aesthetic accomplishments can always overcome what, for want of a better term, must be called the "ick" factor.

A striking number of metalsmiths seem to be playing medical examiner (or coroner) these days as they embrace themes related to illness, disease, and pathologies of the body.

Any discussion of the interplay of modern jewelry and medical conditions must begin with Mary Ann Scherr's pioneering series of "body monitors," which she initiated in 1969. They are directly descended in style and function from the magic amulet—except that the magic that they muster is modern science. Scherr ultimately developed 11 specific body monitors that range from a heart-rate monitor to a portable electrocardiogram. Each is a highly sophisticated electronic instrument embedded in a jewelry housing. Scherr's body monitors do not fetishize illness or bodily assault; rather, each is a serious alert system for

DOUGLAS BUCCI
Morphogenesis III
(Cell Array) Bracelet, 2009
photopolymer,
polychrome, 18k gold
4 3/8 x 4 3/8"
PHOTO: KEN YANOVIAK

DOUGLAS BUCCI
Morphogenesis II
(Cell Array) Bracelet, 2009
photopolymer,
polychrome, 18k gold
4 3/8 x 4 3/8"
COURTESY OF THE
SNYDERMAN-WORKS GALLERIES
PHOTO: KEN YANOVIAK

JULIA BARELLO
Echinacea, 2008, from "Flowers of Rhetoric" series
dyed medical imaging films
21 x 21"
PHOTO: MICHAEL O'NEILL

MARTA LWIN
epiSkin, 2006-07
epithelia cells, dye
PHOTO: KATE KUNATH

DONOVAN SMITH
Corona Three Charm Necklace, 2008,
from "Pandemic" Series
sterling silver, garnet briolettes
length 16"
PHOTO: STEVEN CRAWFORD

DONOVAN SMITH
Variola Necklace, 2008,
from "Pandemic" Series
sterling silver, diamonds
length 18"
PHOTO: STEVEN CRAWFORD

wearers with health concerns—essentially amulets with microcircuits and sensors. As active agents *against* disease and dysfunction, they enable the wearer to demonstrate a kind of bravado in the face of adversity.

Recent work by other artists takes a more diagnostic approach to illness, as if the jewelry is a psychic monitor of our discomfort with the *idea* of medical conditions or disease. New Mexican metalsmith and sculptor Julia Barello, for example, works with discarded medical imaging films that typically capture subtle details of human organs. She cuts and rearranges the films into biomorphic shapes, and often dyes her materials to further obscure their origins. The resulting compositions, such as her lovely 2008 scapula called *Echinacea*, only hint at the medical connection, almost as if they are exorcisms of illness.

For other artists, disease has become a force to invoke, since illness (especially if prolonged) can feel more frightening than death itself. Brooklyn metalsmith Donovan Smith seems to have touched a nerve of free-floating anxiety with his "Pandemic" jewelry series, launched in 2006. At a gut level, his bracelets, earrings, and necklaces modeled on electron microscope photographs of viruses are motorcycle gang jewelry gone way uptown. Rendered in sterling silver with gemstones, the natural forms of the variola (smallpox), filoviridae (Ebola and Marburg viruses), and coronavirus (SARS) are seductively beautiful—and wearing them is like safely flirting with death.

The cell-structure jewelry of Philadelphia-based artist Douglas Bucci is ultimately more about flirting with hope than with mortality. Diagnosed with juvenile diabetes in 1975, Bucci has been the direct beneficiary of computer-aided design, which has delivered such innovations as insulin pumps and advanced blood sugar monitors. He has also become an expert on CAD and rapid prototyping himself. His "Cell Array" works, expressed in photopolymers, demonstrate the construction of entire tissues from hexagons that are as red and clumped as coagulated blood. "These cellular forms are likened to human cells," Bucci writes. "These simple forms can be repeated, stretched, curved, and linked, creating completely unique and innovative tangible structures. The digital has been adopted as a means of reinterpreting design, and making the physical objects of the jewelry discipline."

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The "Cell Array" works are more than handsome jewelry with a tangential reference to Bucci's personal

VINA RUST
Ring #1, 2009, from
"Cysts and Symmetry" Series
sterling silver, cultured
freshwater pearls,
liver of sulfur patina
1 3/8 x 1 1/8 x 1/8"
PHOTO: VINA RUST

TIFFANY PARBS
blister-ring, 2005
blister, skin, digital print
13 x 18 1/2 x 1 3/8"
PHOTO: TERENCE BOGUE

endocrinological functioning. They represent a sanguine attitude about technology: Not only can it deliver prostheses for people with endocrine dysfunction, but it may ultimately create healthy living tissue to bring about a cure.

Because so much of his work for the last two decades has either been aimed at raising AIDS awareness or memorializing AIDS victims, Toronto artist Paul McClure often walks the thin edge between creativity and sentimentality. His elegiac tone is a hard pitch to maintain, but his use of laboratory apparatus—specifically, petri dishes—gives his "Cells" series just enough edge. The increasingly explicit medical imagery of more recent work carries a level of power that earlier examples did not. The magnetic brooch *Erythrocyte* (2005), for example, depicts a large, thriving red blood cell—a symbol of health and vigor for those living with HIV. Each cell is a statement of perseverance and potential regeneration.

The infection of the zeitgeist has affected even upbeat artists. The botanical forms and imagery of Vina Rust's jewelry have always seemed rather sunny. But her 2009 series, "Cysts and Symmetry," directly addresses pathology. As in many of her botanical pieces, Rust builds the principal forms around what appear to be cross sections of vascular systems. This approach produces an appealingly lacy, organic pattern. Then she studs the voids with small pearls, effectively embedding cysts in her lovely tissues. Rather than rejecting or excising the intruding lumps, she seems to celebrate them.

Indeed, an entire school of artists seems to have sprung up to embrace and even cultivate disease and disfigurement.

Indeed, an entire school of artists seems to have sprung up to embrace and even cultivate disease and disfigurement. In retrospect, the phenomenon was almost inevitable. The "modern primitivism" movement that gained momentum in the 1960s basically put a spiritual gloss on sado-masochism and self-mutilation, opening the door on what has become mainstream 21st-century body modification. A growing cadre of metalsmiths and other jewelry artists has kept pace with body modifiers, doing the work of disease through assaults on the flesh—usually their own. There are elements of both self-punishment and exhibitionism inherent in this line of artistic exploration.

Australian artist Tiffany Parbs has explored bodily assaults for several years now, recently mounting a collection of small tools to pinch, magnify, or emboss flesh during a residency in Glasgow. One of her favorite materials is her own skin, and her work verges on self-mutilation. "As a jeweler working in close contact with the body," she writes in an artist's statement, "I am fascinated with the changing narrative of skin surfaces and the embellishments

PAUL MCCLURE
Brooch: Erythrocyte, 2005, from "Cell Series"
sterling silver, resin, magnets, petri dish
brooch: 1 x 1 x ½"
PHOTO: DIGITAL BY DESIGN

PAUL MCCLURE
Brooches from the "Cell Series," 2005
sterling silver, resin, magnets

the body absorbs over time." Parbs's assault on her own epidermis has the control and beauty of artistically conceived pathology. Her *Blister Ring* of 2005 was created by pouring molten wax around the base of the third finger of her left hand, causing a band-like blister to swell up. Some wedding ring—"love hurts," indeed. Yet the plasma-filled band also has a strange beauty.

Pain as an aesthetic statement is a slippery path for an artist, and possibly not all that healthy for an audience, either. As poet Denise Levertov wrote in an obituary for her friend, poet Anne Sexton, who committed suicide in 1974, "We who are alive must make clear, as she could not, the distinction between creativity and self-destruction."

With her *epiSkin*, Marta Lwin has taken a far less invasive approach to the intersection of medicine and jewelry. Lwin describes her work as "wearable sculpture," but it is literally a second skin. She cultures epithelial cells in the laboratory to grow artificial skin into custom-designed forms. She then dyes and seals the skin in a transparent medium, which literally clings to the body. While there is definitely an echo of the film *Silence of the Lambs* in wearing skin on skin, the decoration is non-transgressive—ultimately no stranger than wearing fur.

In another time and under a different ethos, the silicon creations of Courtney Starrett would have seemed whimsical. Starrett's strikingly biomorphic forms and swelling rubber bubbles, however, are explicitly parasitic. She describes them as "forms that feed upon the personality of the host....I want to establish the illusion of the piece grabbing, sucking, or squeezing onto a part of the host." It is enough to evoke the *Alien* sci-fi horror thrillers.

It is tempting to suggest that horror films must have been an influence on Lauren Kalman as well. Her deliberately unsettling jewelry, which mimics states of disease, would have made the old-time monster make-up artists proud. Kalman, in fact, constructed most of the jewelry as props for performance art and the photographs and videos that document it. Her work has genuine shock value, though it achieves its effect by the hoariest of approaches: conjoining beauty and repulsion.

"I am replicating and transforming disease through illustration, jewelry objects and photography," Kalman writes. "These diseases—including acne, cancer, herpes, and syphilis—are presented in my work as jeweled infections, lesions, and sores." Most importantly, however, she recognizes the jewelry objects as intentionally provocative. "They are hybridizations of objects we associate with beauty, status, or wealth, and the grotesque or undesirable aspects of the skin," she writes.

Her extreme exhibitionism has its dramatic purposes—principally to serve as the opening salvo in a dialogue with her audience about body images. In works

COURTNEY STARRETT
Stretch One, 2005, from
"Para-Site" Series
Urethane infiltrated 3D
print starch, silicone rubber
8 ½ x 7 x 2"
PHOTO: THAD ALLENDER

COURTNEY STARRETT
Scarf, 2004, from
"Para-Site" Series
sterling silver, silicone rubber
PHOTO: THAD ALLENDER

While self-destruction can be a source for good art, it should not be confused with art. Ultimately, the work—be it poems or jewelry—has to stand on its own.

like *Nevus Comedonicus* (2009) from her "Dermatological Embellishments" series, Kalman forces us to acknowledge the loveliness of pattern. Ultimately, her works succeed less as jewelry than as objects to be manipulated in the larger context of performance and documentation. For all the marvelous craftsmanship, the art lies less in the objects than in the act of exhibiting them on—and most importantly, *in*—the skin.

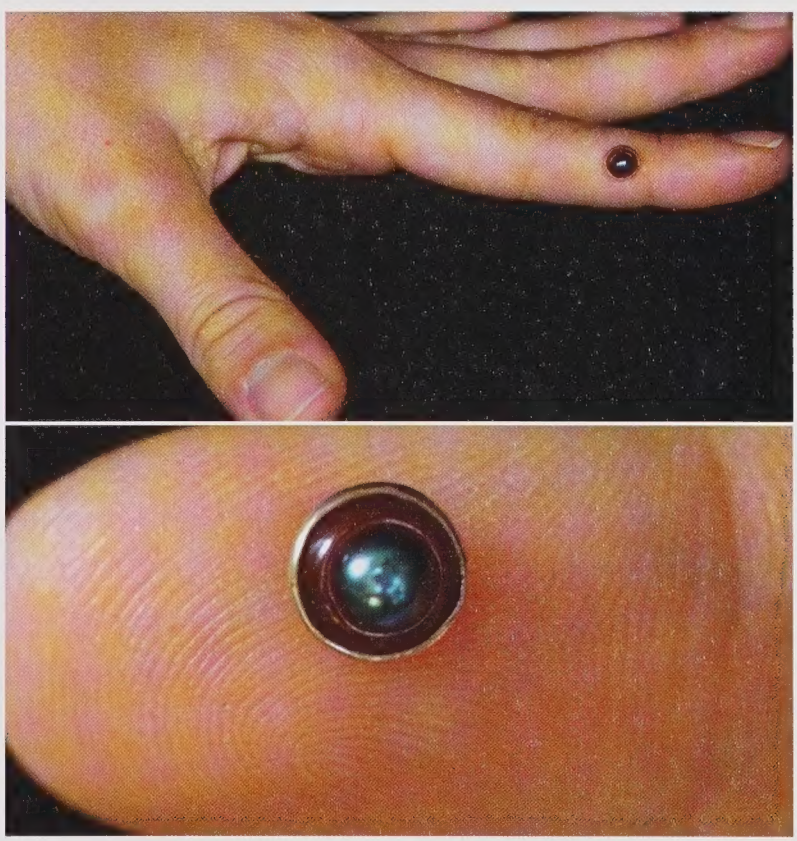
The jolt of Kalman's imagery is essentially theatrical. All the acupuncture needles and piercings are, after all, literally skin deep. By contrast, Kathleen W. Kennedy's "Dis-Ease" series (2009) is profoundly disturbing precisely because it is so quiet and emotionally, if not physically, invasive. Kennedy embraces a precept of holistic medicine that revealing bodily imperfections or "states of dis-ease" is the first step toward overcoming them.

Thus, the "Dis-Ease" objects of copper and enamel are essentially tumor jewels. A silk tail attached to the back of each piece is slid into a natural body crevice—armpit, groin, etc.—to make the tumor integral to the body. In practice, this means that the objects sit adjacent to major lymph nodes in areas where the wearer logically feels physically vulnerable. Are they creepy or brave? Fatalistic or therapeutic? In her artist's statement for "Dis-Ease," Kennedy opts for the positive, noting that "Being in a state of Dis-ease rather than having a disease allows one not to be consumed by illness."

Jewelry predicated on body modification and/or assault is difficult to evaluate because it is often deeply personal, and thus hermetically sealed from criticism. *(My emotions, my body—how dare you?)* Yet the personal nature of much of the work also engenders a level of sympathy with the artist. *(Feel my pain!)* While self-destruction can be a *source* for good art, it should not be confused with art. Ultimately, the work—be it poems or jewelry—has to stand on its own.

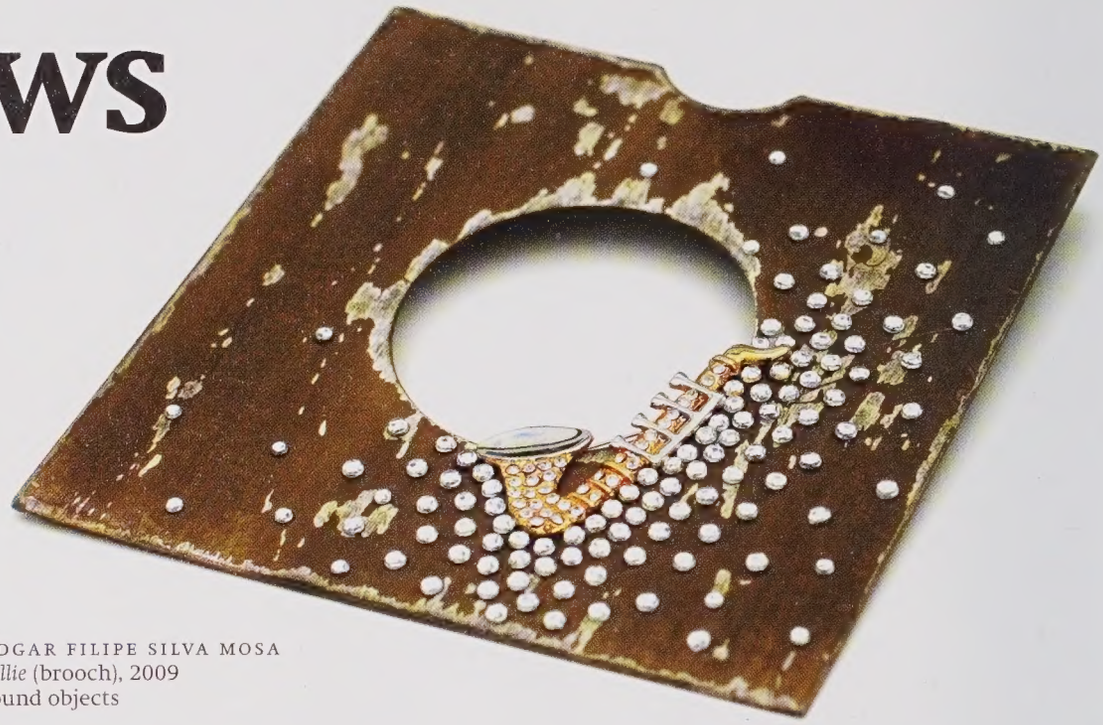
Transgressive jewelry—especially if theatrically conceived—could also turn out to be a passing cultural interest. New times spawn new zeitgeists. It is altogether possible that jewelry fashioned around pathology, abnormality, and disease will follow the course of a real-world medical pandemic. Newly mutated viruses are often highly contagious at the outset, but even Ebola lost its punch as the population developed a general resistance. Once the shock of the new wears off in art, we become inured to everything except the artistry.

Patricia Harris and David Lyon are writers based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



LAUREN KALMAN
Blooms, Efflorescence, and Other Dermatological Embellishments (Gonorrhea), 2009
inkjet print
26 x 26"

Reviews



EDGAR FILIPE SILVA MOSA
Billie (brooch), 2009
found objects

Sustainable Jewellery

Gallery Louise Smit,
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

December 12, 2009–January 30, 2010

by Liesbeth den Besten

In the slipstream of the December 2009 climate conference in Copenhagen, which sadly failed to advance the issue of climate politics, sustainability is a fashionable topic. Suddenly sustainability is everywhere, even in the world of art jewelry. Unfortunately the motives for collecting and presenting jewelry under the "umbrella" of sustainability are rather feeble and can be a real pitfall, as was proved by Gallery Louise Smit's "Sustainable Jewellery" exhibition, organized by Monika Zampa and inspired by Julia Manheim's 2009 book of the same name.

The exhibition presents some of Manheim's themes: "old for new" (gold and silver rings by Marc Monzo, David Bielander's transformation of a nineteenth-century Thonet chair into a Bavarian white sausage necklace); "recycling" (jewelry from plastic bags by Beppe Kessler, from telephone book paper by Janna Syvanoja, and from used footballs by Noémie Doge); "found objects" (transformed costume jewelry by Edgar Mosa, and combinations of rusty chains with pearls by Monika Zampa); and "found in nature" (Tarja Tuupanen and her stone jewelry, Bas Bouman's wooden chains, Claire Baloge's camel dung). Unfortunately, the pieces in this exhibition, though beautiful, intriguing, and inspiring, had nothing to do with sustainability.

CLAIRE BALOGE
Bridal Necklace, 2009
camel dung, silk, gold leaf

The exhibition suggested that gold and silver jewelry, often made from recycled material (recycling is a normal practice in jewelry anyhow and the reason why not much original historical jewelry is left), is therefore sustainable, and every piece made from a recycled or natural material is sustainable as well. This reasoning is odd and beyond the truth. If there is one thing we have learned from politics, it is that sustainability is an effort. Sustainability should be in the mind of the maker; it is a choice. It is about living a different life; about being aware of pollution and environment; about being aware of slave labor and other dehumanizing effects of mining and producing; about taking responsibility and making a statement.

A daisy chain, created by little girls of any generation before and to come, is not an example of sustainable jewelry, although it is made from temporal and natural material that will fade away rapidly without leaving any traces of pollution or human disruption. The fact is that it is not made with the intention to offer an alternative to an otherwise non-sustainable item or product. The same applies to examples of contemporary art jewelry made from telephone book paper, plastic bags, seeds, camel dung, or any found objects. An artist can pick these materials and appreciate their beauty without making any political or social comment. And as long as they are made with chemical glues, paints, or resins, and combined with gold, silver, or gems that are not obtained from fair-trade producers, this jewelry cannot be called sustainable. Lisa Walker's work is not sustainable, even when she uses the rubbish from her own studio floor to create it.

It is good that jewelry artists are urged to think about sustainability in their work, although the effect of an art jeweler making one-off jewelry of reused discarded materials is minimal. Art jewelers can ease their conscience by abandoning polluting materials and techniques. In my opinion, the only way art jewelers can really make a difference is to use gold, silver, diamonds, and gems that are not tainted with blood or to use recycled gold from waste and residues There are already fair-trade jewelers; perhaps now it's the time to indicate fair-trade art jewelry galleries. This could be the beginning of a true green jewelry movement.

Liesbeth den Besten is a Dutch art historian who works as a freelance writer and curator in the field of jewelry and crafts.

Furthermore
www.louisesmit.nl
www.copenhagenclimatecouncil.com
www.ethicalmetalsmiths.org
www.greengold-oroverde.org
www.c-hafner.de

Coltivando con Rosso: Heather White van Stolk

Mobilia Gallery, Cambridge, Massachusetts

November 5–28, 2009

by Martina Windels

"Coltivando con Rosso," loosely translated from Italian as "Growing with Red," is a small group of new jewelry by Heather White van Stolk, all incorporating what at first glance seem to be beads. Upon closer inspection, these bulbous red elements look more like fruit, ripe and ready to burst. White van Stolk has cast these juicy, plump berries in red polyurethane, ranging from 6 to 24 mm in size and slightly oblong; they provide the ornamentation applied to what she calls "jewelry substrates."

Several brooches are made using wood from a sycamore tree with a lively grain as a base: simple, clean shapes act as armatures on which the red berries seem to grow. One, with a long, rectangular piece of wood, looks like a stylized geometric branch of a fruit tree, while the others are more abstract and, with that, more about formal investigation.

The *pièce de résistance* of the exhibition is a large cluster pendant incorporating various sizes of red berry shapes assembled to form an intense, overladen grape bunch. The big luscious pendant hangs from a sterling silver chain, with gradated links mirroring the sizes of red shapes, juxtaposed in a linear assembly using the same circular contours in metal. The seamless berries, cast with stretchy platinum silicone molds, are unexpectedly light, allowing the hefty dangling bunch a strong visual presence, while wearing lightly around the neck.

Also on display are some earlier works by White van Stolk, several pieces from the "Botanical Fiction" series, which incorporates cast body elements to create jewelry depicting imaginary floral specimen, like *Blue Bell* brooch of 2008. Here, ten hollow human fingertips are cast in sterling silver and attached to silver branches, each filled with an intense cobalt blue pigment, creating a large fictitious plant. Body parts also comprise the "Chrysanthemum" brooches: rows of cast human teeth in bright, happy shades of polyurethane, are arranged in circles to form decorative flowers, conveying a surreal sense of morbid beauty.

The surprise element in White van Stolk's earlier work—the moment when the viewer identifies the components as cast belly buttons, nipples or thumbs—is missing from the new jewelry, which is more minimal and restrained. The resulting works are more subtle and further removed from their origin.

Clearly, White van Stolk likes to work in series, and continues to use casting to make multiple elements, which she then assembles into larger pieces. In the earlier jewelry the process was visible in the texture of the cast body parts, but the new work conceals its process (which seems to contradict the importance that White van Stolk assigns to it when talking about the development of the fruit-shaped beads).

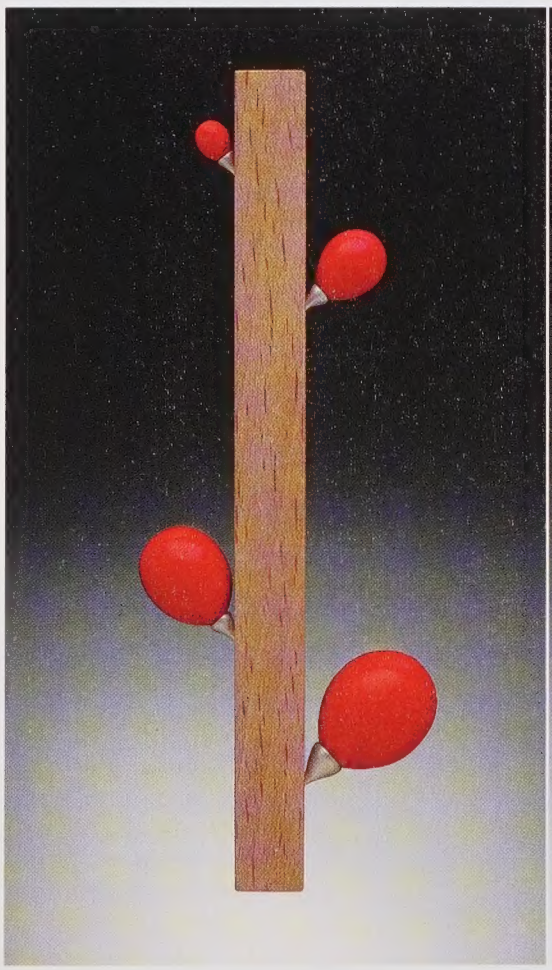
The content is hidden from view as well. As the title states, growth is the subject, and the deliberate choice of red for the ripe, bursting fruits hints at passion, anger, blood, power, and even forbidden fruit as possible themes that have not yet surfaced and come fully into play.

The exhibition serves to provide a retrospective of White van Stolk's jewelry. It also portrays an artist's work in transition and leaves the viewer curious about what will emerge next. With the red fruit shapes, this feels very much like the beginning of a new narrative ready to unfold over time as it continues to "grow with red."

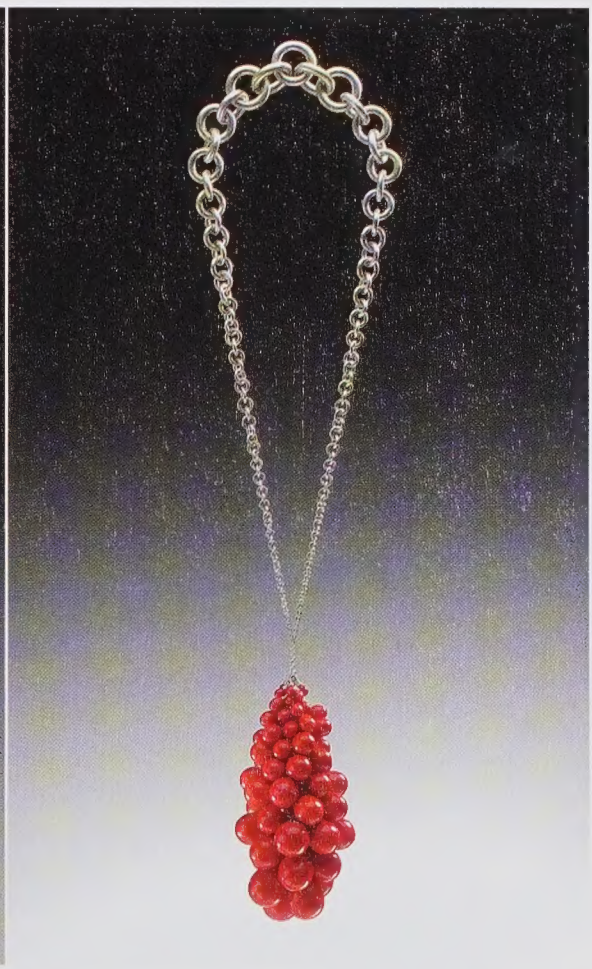
Martina Windels is a Rhode Island–based jeweler, former gallery owner and writer.

Furthermore
www.mobilia-gallery.com

Brooch #1, 2009
sterling silver, polyurethane, sycamore
5 x 2 x 1"



Cluster, 2009
sterling silver, polyurethane
16 x 3 x 3"



Reiko Ishiyama: Floating Space

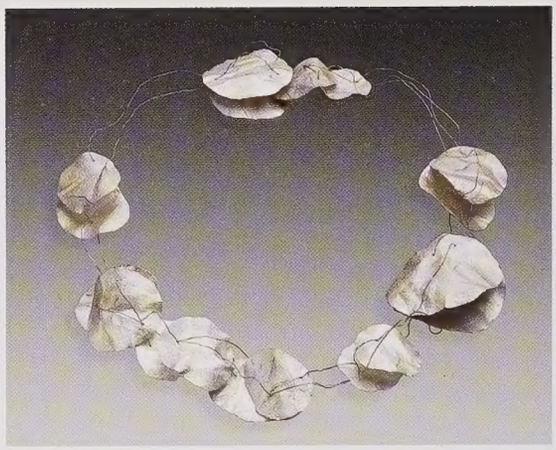
Jewelerswerk Galerie,
Washington, D.C.

November 6–26, 2009

by Kate Dobbs Ariail

It has become so commonplace to speak of art as being paradoxical that I hate to describe Reiko Ishiyama's bewitching silver and gold necklaces and bracelets as such. But that comprehension of oppositional difference accounts for much of their charm, and immensely charming they are. Volumetric forms that make you think of boulders or Stonehenge are actually as light as feathers and small as beads. Thin curls of metal mimic striated, exfoliated bark fallen to the ground, but retain their nonchalant metallic resistance to time's depredations, perched as they are upon a brooch. Delicate pale pods ready to drift aloft turn out to be beaten silver—firmly secured with neat rivets. Wandering among these pieces, so carefully crafted to look like nature's modest marvels, I was reminded of cunning *trompe l'oeil* garden design, in which the viewer is made to believe she sees vistas that do not exist. For all their appearance of casual fragility, Reiko Ishiyama's body ornaments are imbued with a calculated strength.

One feels energy radiating from the metal due to all the beating, texturing, and shaping it has received at Ishiyama's hands. The necklaces especially tremble with it, their improbably delicate wires quivering even as the simple forms they string together settle about the neck. To make the exhibition's most beautiful necklace, Ishiyama textured silver sheet until it resembled deckle-edged, dimple-surfaced, cast rag paper; she then folded bits of this "paper" into 12 polyhedrons triangular in section. Each section is held closed by a single rivet. There is something so lovely about that small assertive pin, so definite amid the silver's visual softness. The dozen sections, some lightly patinaed with liver of sulfur, are strung together loosely and articulate easily, adding motion and sound to the wearing experience. This object that appears ready to sublimate into the ether remains attached to earthbound human form with a straightforward pin-and-keyhole clasp. Another fine necklace in this series is similarly made, but its components resemble the wavy, glossy disks of the money plant, and it rustles like that plant shaking in an autumn wind.



Scattered Pebbles Necklace, 2009
14k white gold, sterling silver
7 x 7 x 7"
PHOTO: DAVID KATZ

Slashed Bark (brooch), 2007
14k white gold, sterling silver
2 ½ x 1 ⅛ x 3 ¼"
PHOTO: DAVID KATZ

Sometimes Ishiyama releases the energy accrued in her metal by cutting through the sheet to allow forms to spring out. One bracelet in this exhibition makes it look so easy. Here the substantial sheet silver was beaten against a harder surface to striate it, patinaed and buffed, and then cut into spiraling strips. Gathered like damp fettuccine into a five-strand twist, it encircles the wrist in a liquid flow. Like the necklaces, all that vibrating energy is held closely in check by a simple metal end cap and more of those uncompromising rivets.

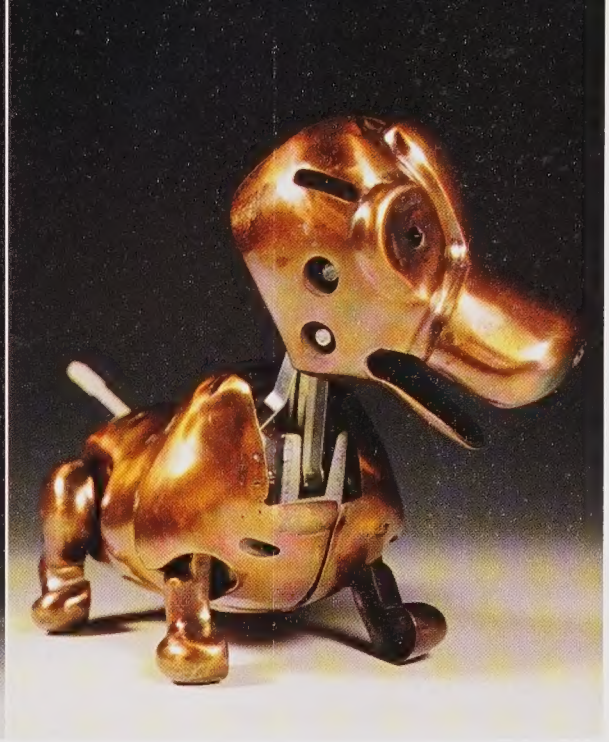
The show also included a series of wonderful "bark" brooches. These have a kind of random orderliness, looking less designed than part of nature's fractal patterning of the forest floor. Ishiyama slashes and curls her silver sheet, then uses dark sienna patina to mimic birch bark's striations, pairing it with luminous brushes of gold

wash, so that the white silver appears sunlit. Each curl is individualized, similar to but distinct from its fellows in the same way that makes nature's surfaces so visually rich. Ishiyama applies the lessons of nature to her art with unusual acumen, and despite the attempts of her exquisite craft to demurely conceal itself, we see it clearly among the lights and shadows of her springing curls of "bark."

Kate Dobbs Ariail writes about the arts from her home in Durham, N.C.

Furthermore
www.reikoishiyama.com
www.jewelerswerk.com

Bronze Rooster, 2009
patinated bronze, battery-powered mechanism with sound
8 ½ x 8 ¼ x 7 ½"



Bronze Bassett, 2009
patinated bronze, battery-powered mechanism with sound
6 ½ x 13 ½ x 4"

Remains: Cathy McClure

Moss, New York City

November 20–December 31, 2009

by Bruce Metcalf

The Moss gallery and store in SoHo has been an internationally recognized proponent of cutting-edge design for more than 15 years. Moss often presents limited or open-ended editions by such luminaries as Studio Job, Tord Boontje, Gaetano Pesce, and Hella Jongerius. On a recent visit, I was surprised to find a collection of strange metal automata, rather like oversized wind-up toys that migrated from a mildly psychotic nightmare.

The quasi-toys are the work of Cathy McClure, who studied under Robly Glover in the metal department at Texas Tech University. Although her background is in the culture of metalsmithing, she grew dissatisfied with the field's conventional boundaries. In a statement, she remarks, "I didn't want to do teapots anymore. I wanted to move people in a different way."

After fabricating a series of zoetropes with recorded soundtracks, McClure hit on the idea of repurposing plush robotic toys, fuzzy playthings that walk and play recorded sounds.

McClure cuts the soft fabric exteriors off the toys, and separates the plastic skeletons from the mechanisms. She then casts the plastic parts in bronze or silver, and finally reassembles them. (There's a video of her snipping the skin off one plush robot, like some earnest toy butcher.) The finished objects are delightfully creepy. Since their original mechanisms and sound circuits remain intact, they can be set in action. They stagger about, emitting tinny bleats that are barely recognizable. Their eyes are vacant, their heads are like skulls, but their surfaces recall bronze statuary. To see one of McClure's objects is disconcerting, like watching your fondest desire transformed into a zombie.

We have lived in the twenty-first century for a decade now, and it's obvious that traditional metalsmithing has been removed to the far margins of culture. The demand for handmade silver teapots is infinitesimal. What to do, then, with the passionate desire to make things carefully out of metal? To survive, the craft must deploy a new set of strategies, and address a new set of contexts. McClure does both.

McClure's strategy is repurposing. She appropriates these remnants of mass-produced goods and subjects them to a series of craft-based processes: casting the skeleton and remaking gears in the mechanisms so they can stand up to the increased weight of the metal shells. The original toy is repurposed to become an enigmatic object, and meticulous hand labor is repurposed in the process. It's all very twenty-first century.

And what about context? Even the gallery assistant at Moss said McClure's work confused him. He had difficulty believing they were truly design, because design entails both serial production and a relation to function. McClure's spectral robots might be works of art, he admitted, but Moss is not an art gallery. And while she produces her 'bots in limited editions, they seemed too far from the context of design to be totally convincing. From his point of view, McClure's work provoked an identity crisis.

The newest generation of makers, designers, and artists embraces precisely this kind of genre-crossing. Identity crisis is good. Not only does it undermine useless old boundaries, but ambivalence about identity is a central metaphor for life in the postmodern world. Furthermore, there's a certain exhilaration to crisis: safely constrained within the limits of art-making, crisis can afford a vivid experience. Which precisely describes watching McClure's lurching beasties in action: vivid. Creepy and cute; provocative and funny; perplexing and satisfying: McClure shows how contemporary metalsmiths can "move people in a different way."

Bruce Metcalf, a Philadelphia-based jeweler and writer, is co-author with Janet Koplos of Makers: A History of American Studio Craft.

Furthermore
www.cathymcclure.com
www.mossonline.com

Body/Image

Gwen Frostic School of Art, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo

October 15–November 13, 2009

by Phil Renato

Installation view of "Body/Image" exhibition with Ruudt Peters's "Lingam" series (right) and "Balloon Mouth Pieces" by Yevgeniya Kaganovich.
PHOTO: CAROLINE GORE

The exhibition "Body/Image" focused on "unique ways of using the body as a platform for the working process and as a functional component" within art. When I read this brief statement, my mind immediately conjured what some of those ways might be. Given the immense store of data available today, it would be easy to hyperlink my way through a dozen or so artists, products, or projects that shared some of those keywords. Sitting with my laptop, however, with the world's information at my fingertips, I would have missed out on a crucial context and blend of objects and ideas provided by a deftly curated exhibition.

The professional gallery at WMU looks to have been carved out of a major metropolitan museum: large, with an open floor plan, modern architectural lines, natural light, and a two-story ceiling. This site seems to demand bold, challenging objects and to encourage its audience to consider their forms and meaning in the round. It therefore seemed an unlikely proposition that a collection of intimate, body-centered artworks could command a structure powerful enough to display space capsules or Damien Hirst's tiger shark.

But the curator and director of exhibitions, Don Desmett, chose artists with compelling forms, materials, and purpose. Some of their work was nearly perfect in scale and tone for this space, while others were mounted in ways that appeared natural for them and the overall rhythm of the installation.

The exhibition started quietly on a large wall punctuated with a grouping from Maria Phillips's vaguely crustaceous "Portrait" series. These yellowed brooches clearly evoke the artist's intent of, "imagining and mimicking" the ways that biological forms stir at the cellular level. The somewhat grotesque specimens, composed in wire, gut, and found materials, are radically different from the two fields to which they relate. The role of these idiosyncratic compositions as adornment is largely ignored or transparent, and all references to natural science are neutered or freed of didactic pretense.

The space was bisected with a dotted line of Ruudt Peters's found and created phalli suspended from the ceiling by rods, pulleys, and cords. These clusters of glass, wood, and mixed media "Lingams" swayed gently at crotch level, demanding attention. Colorful, fragile, and literal, they were also the most academic objects in the exhibition, referring to the ritual, sculptural representation of the god Shiva's genitals. Peters translates impressions from his travels in South Asia through his own creations, combined with homologous found objects.

Tina Rath's collars and brooches were presented in vitrines that capped pillow-topped wood pedestals. This work bridged the primitive, the ephemeral, and the elegant, combining materials such as mink, satin, and gold. Her statement called these objects "by-products" of her observations and studies into subjects such as power. But, compared to the work of her neighboring artist, they were conservative and materialistic.

Suska Mackert's "Andy Warhol Collection" was almost entirely analytical. An immense amount of real estate was dedicated to these cryptic cultural statements, expressed with deconstructed jewelry auction catalogues and presented as color-photocopied pages. This documentation of a narrow study of ornament reads as vacant, alienated collage, cut 100 years after Braque and Picasso first played with this form of recontextualized imagery. Sandra Enterline's "One Thousand Souvenirs" is straightforward and safe, a collection of 90 glass ampules filled with materials gathered from her life and travel, neatly displayed in rows.

Three enormous floating objects by Yevgeniya Kaganovich buoyed the exhibition. *Balloon Mouth Pieces 12,13,* and *14* morph into cast rubber masks and float five feet off the ground, moored by cables and stanchions. The "solidified gestures" of a mouth in relief beneath yolk-colored spheres seemed to fill the room. These soft focal points of the show are the clearest evidence of the efficacy of exhibitions. It is nearly impossible to imagine this work being understood through photography or other documentation.

Together, these artists present daring, beautiful,

curious, and banal visions of the state of our field. Most of these objects exist outside of the context of personal adornment. Or maybe that is the consequence of this exhibition: to lift the work into a position where it is difficult to conceive it applied to the world beyond these walls.

Phil Renato is the chair of the Allesee Metals/Jewelry Design program at Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Hratch Babikian: Origins, visited

Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington

June 12–October 18, 2009

by Christine Tate

Though the line between craft and art blurred long ago, there is still a meaningful distinction to be made between them. The difference is less one of effect or result—as in the outmoded dichotomy between practical utility and its absence—and more one of intention. In art, the maker's idea is primary; in craft, technique comes first. Hratch Babikian is an extraordinary craftsman. This is not to say that he lacks ideas, but that he is motivated principally by devotion to the materials he shapes—meticulously and exquisitely—and to the perfection of his skill in doing so.

The works featured in "Origins, visited" are executed in largely traditional mediums: gold, silver, copper, bronze, iron, and wood. Most have the literal or figurative shapes of bodies in water (jellyfish and sea urchins) or objects associated with them (fishing lures and line). Some of the larger pieces hang from the rafters in the diminutive but lofty E. Avery Draper Showcase gallery. For this exhibition, the lower portion of the gallery is painted white and the upper walls, well above visitors' heads, are a deep taupe. With lighting that emphasizes the three-dimensionality of the vertical works and creates exaggerated shadows, the effect is of being underwater, perhaps in a grotto.

Babikian's biography indicates that this is likely intentional. Ethnically Armenian, he was born and reared in Lebanon, exploring the remnants of forests of Biblical fame and the Mediterranean coast as a child. Age 14 when civil war broke out, Babikian left Beirut for college in Philadelphia at 18. More than 30 years later, he is still there. Though he has lived in the U.S. far longer than he did in Lebanon, his aesthetic sensibilities were largely formed before he emigrated. One need not read his biography to see the formative influences—his origins—in his work. "Origins" is, in fact, the perfect title for this collection. In addition to referencing Babikian's own familial and cultural origins, the works speak of the origin of Western civilization in the Fertile Crescent, of modernity in ancient history, and of life itself in the sea.

At the center of the gallery, a white platform holds smaller works laid out like so many specimens on a lab table. This group includes one of Babikian's signature series, "Sea Urchins." While they are remarkable, the most compelling pieces in the exhibition are large, stylized, biomorphic sculptures hanging at the edges of the gallery. *Ocean Flower* (2009) is on the wall at the very center of the show. An impossibly elegant teardrop of wood subtly distressed with paint, it entices the passing visitor to enter the gallery. A great spray of golden wire "hair" flares out at the bottom and casts a lacy shadow on the wall below. Perhaps because it is less elaborately worked than some other pieces in the collection, the effect of *Ocean Flower's* two simple parts is far greater than their sum.

Floater 3, 2009
bronze
30 x 6 x 6"

In the corners that flank the gallery entrance are two of three pieces from Babikian's jellyfish-inspired "Floater" series. *Floater 2* is the largest work in the exhibition and the only one that includes a new material: monofilament. Hung low enough that its ends touch the floor, strands of fishing line and metal wire swirl gracefully from a great carved wooden head. Like a giant pendant, the work is suspended from a large bronze bail. *Floater 3* is a bronze disk hanging from a thin stem. It truly does appear to float rather than to hang. Most of its length is below the disk, from which dangle gracefully arced tentacles and linked appendages ending in fishhooks. The hooks allude not only to the dreaded sting of the jellyfish, but also to the fishermen who use them. They remind us that predator and prey are not always readily distinguishable from each other—just as art and craft can coincide in the work of a master like Babikian.

Christine Tate teaches art history at the Delaware College of Art and Design, where she serves as head of academic studies.

Furthermore
www.hratchbabikian.com
www.thedcca.org

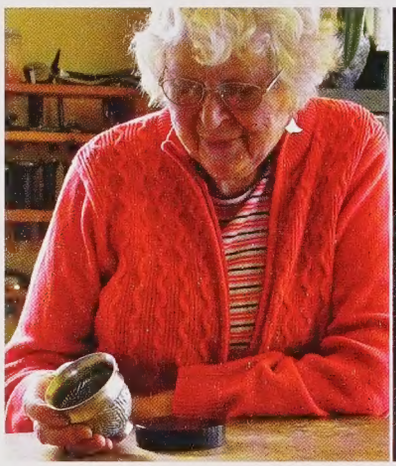
Ocean Flower, 2009
wood, paint, and bronze
42 x 24 x 10"

Society of North American Goldsmiths

ARTISTS. DESIGNERS. JEWELERS. METALSMITHS.

The Society of North American Goldsmiths supports and advances the professional practice of artists, designers, jewelers, and metalsmiths. Through education, innovation, and leadership, SNAG provides access to a vibrant and passionate community.

BY DANA SINGER



Lois Etherington Betteridge, SNAG's Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, holding the sterling silver award
PHOTO: KEITH BETTERIDGE

Attendees enjoying the annual pin swap at SNAG's 2010 conference in Houston

SNAG Successful Conference in Houston

Six hundred people turned Houston into a jewelry and metalsmithing mecca during our conference, "going to eXtremes," in March, hosted by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and co-chaired by Diane Falkenhagen and Sandie Zilker. Huge thanks to Rio Grande, worldwide distributor of tools and equipment, for being the corporate sponsor of the SNAG conference for the sixth consecutive year. Our gratitude also goes to the University of North Texas, The Boardman Family Foundation, Sara Morgan, Bill Gangi Multisensory Arts, Otto Frei, Moo.com, Charon Kransen Arts, and many others for their sponsorships of individual conference sessions. We thank Todd Reed Inc., Jewelers Mutual Charitable Giving Fund, Sam Shaw Jewelry, Barbara Heinrich Studios, The Metal Museum, Eric Ryser, and Cleverwerx for their generous support of our conference student scholarships, which were awarded to 29 students attending in Houston.

Lois Etherington Betteridge Awarded for Lifetime Achievement

On opening day of the SNAG Houston conference, Lois Etherington Betteridge became the thirteenth recipient of the Society's award for a lifetime of exceptional service and achievement in the jewelry and metalsmithing field. Betteridge, through her teaching, lecturing, and studio work, has been perhaps the most important influence in Canadian silversmithing in the twentieth century. The elegant sterling silver award was created by SNAG member Cynthia Eid.

SNAG Welcomes New President-Elect and Board Members

In March, Sue Amendolara became SNAG's President-Elect. Eliana Arenas and James Obermeier were elected to the board of directors by the membership. SNAG sincerely thanks outgoing president Kris Patzlaff and board members James Thurman and Sandie Zilker for their many years of dedicated service.

Sue Amendolara (right), SNAG's President-Elect, with new board members James Obermeier and Eliana Arenas

***Metalsmith* Editor Curates "Different Tempers"**

Metalsmith editor, Suzanne Ramljak, served as curator and catalogue author for the traveling exhibition "Different Tempers: Jewelry & Blacksmithing." Featuring the work of seven blacksmiths and seven jewelers, the exhibition highlights the distinct properties as well as the commonalities of these two metalsmithing realms. Following its opening at the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design in North Carolina, it moved to the National Ornamental Metal Museum. From there the exhibition travels to the University of North Texas and the Rubin Center for the Visual Arts, El Paso.

SNAG Members' Showcase

Holly Stein
hollystein.net

Susan Knopp
susanknoppenamels.com

Roland Dubuc
rolanddubuc.com

Jenny Reeves
jennyreeves.com

Pam Caiden
pamcaidin.com

Abigail Connell
abigailconnell.com

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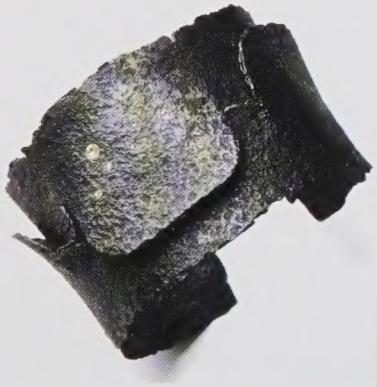

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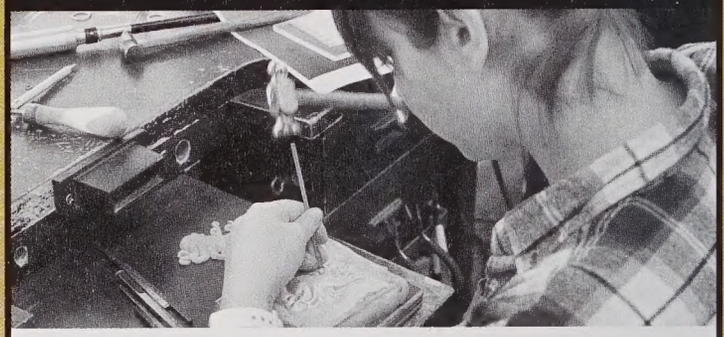

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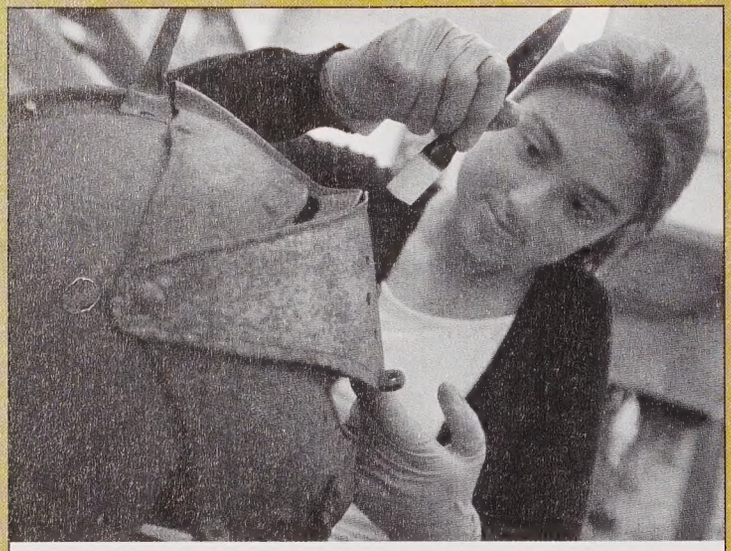

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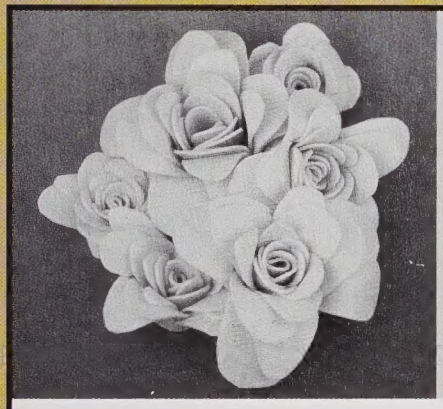

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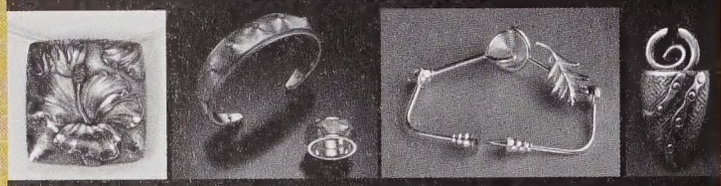

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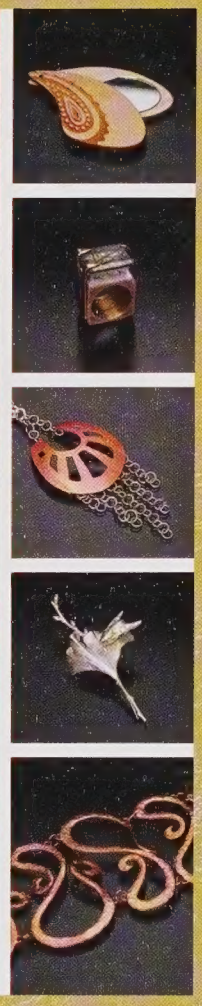

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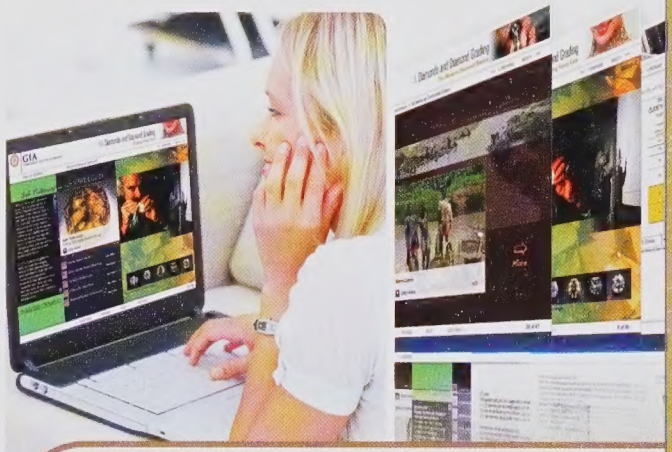

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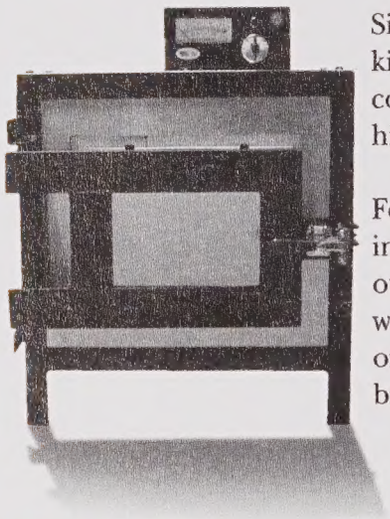

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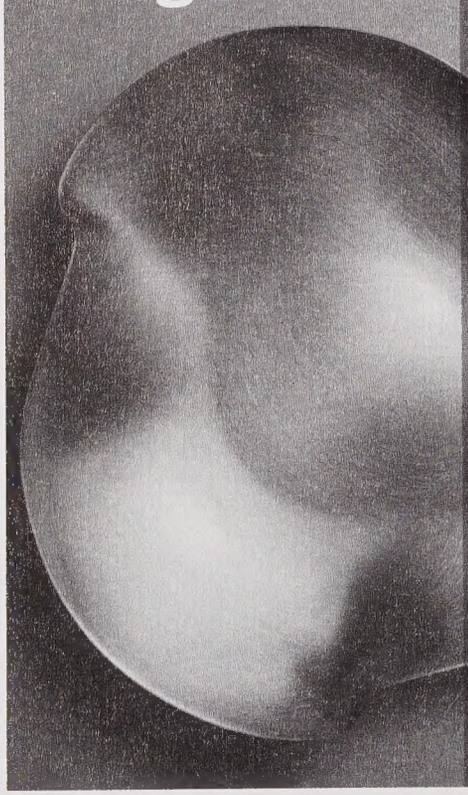

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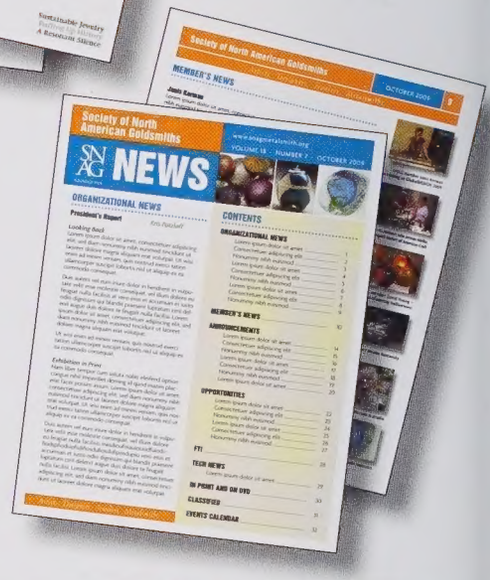

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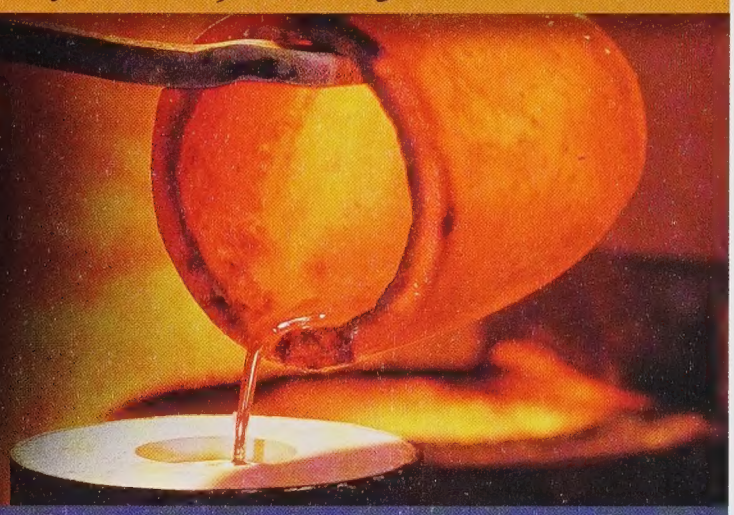

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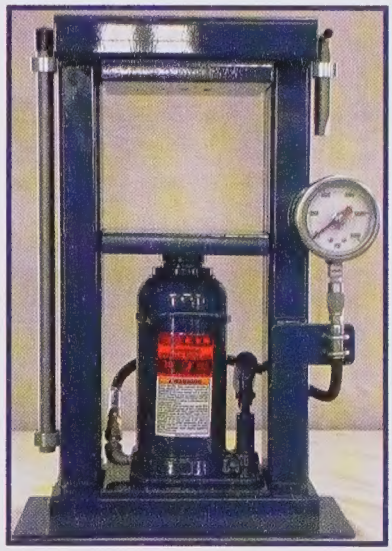

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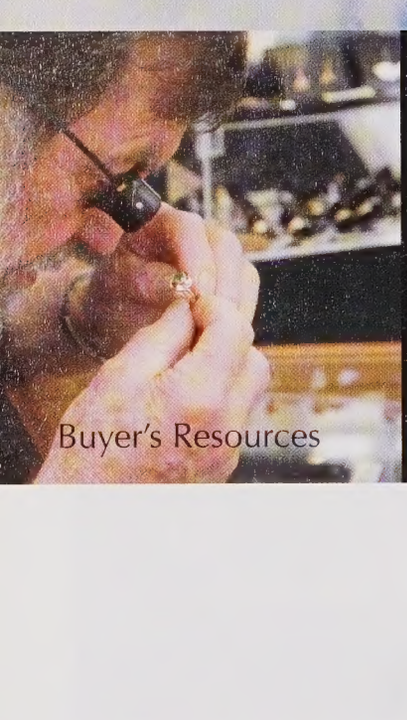

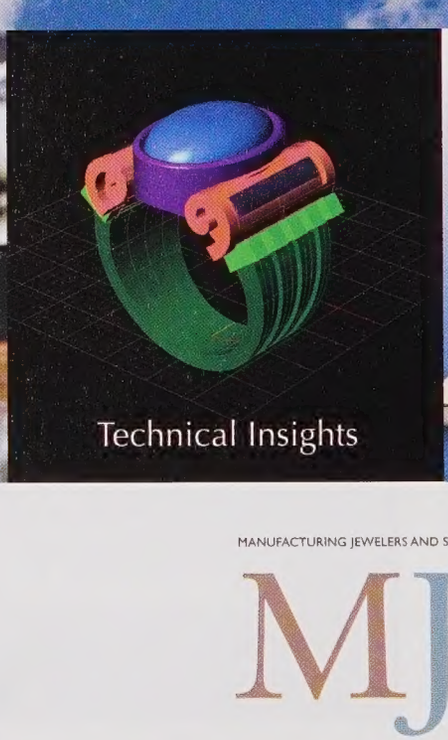

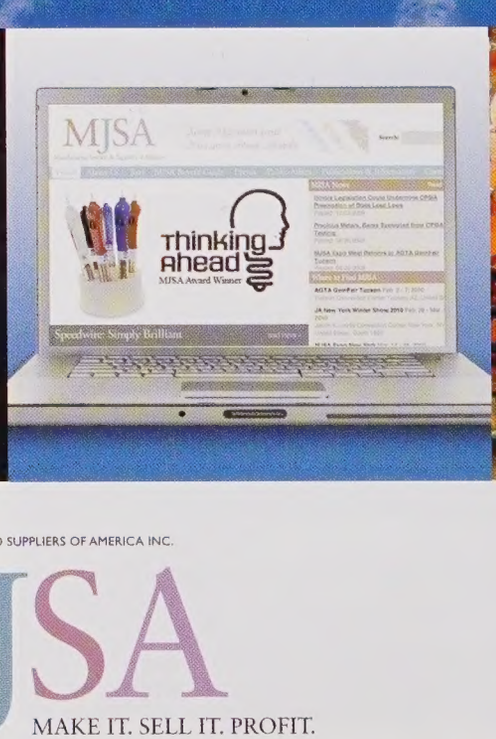

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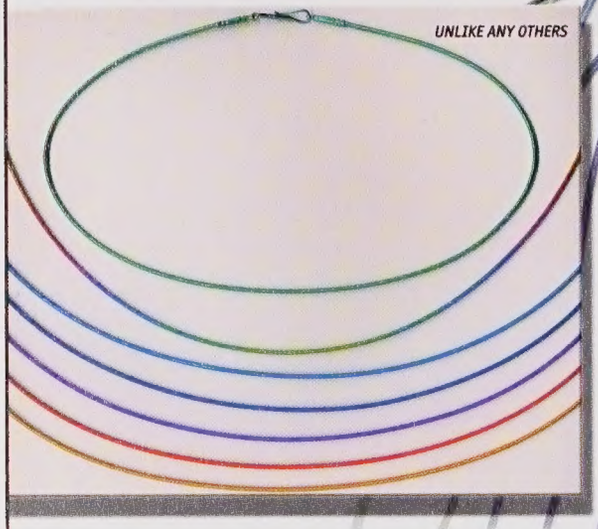

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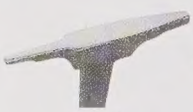

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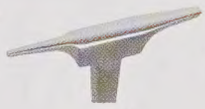

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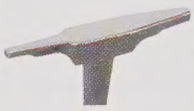

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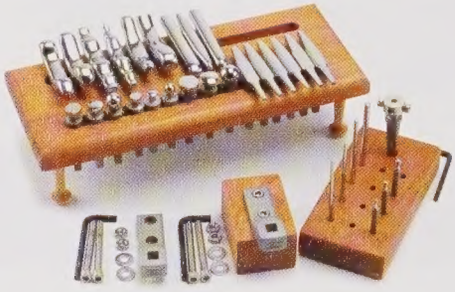

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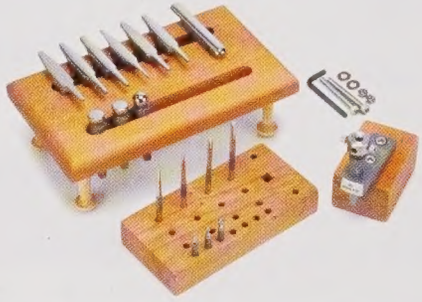

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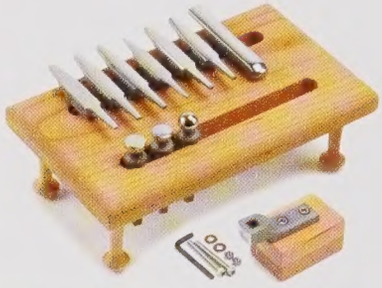

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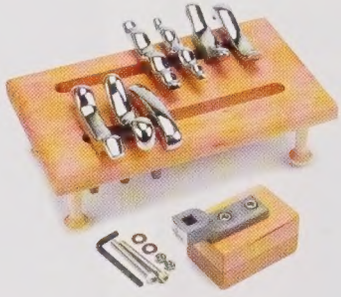

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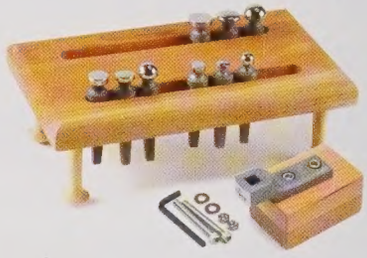

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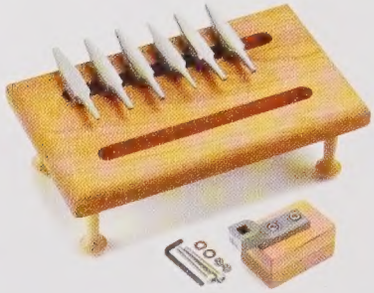

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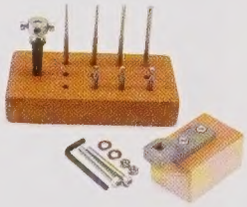

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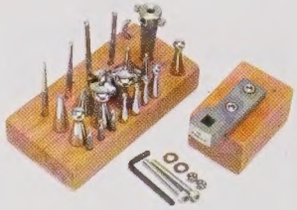

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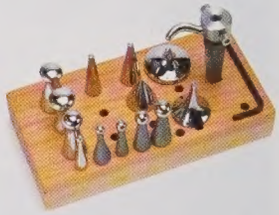

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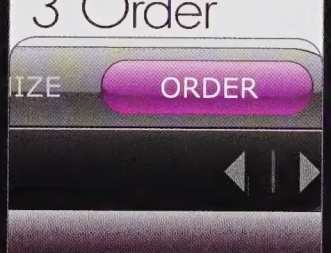

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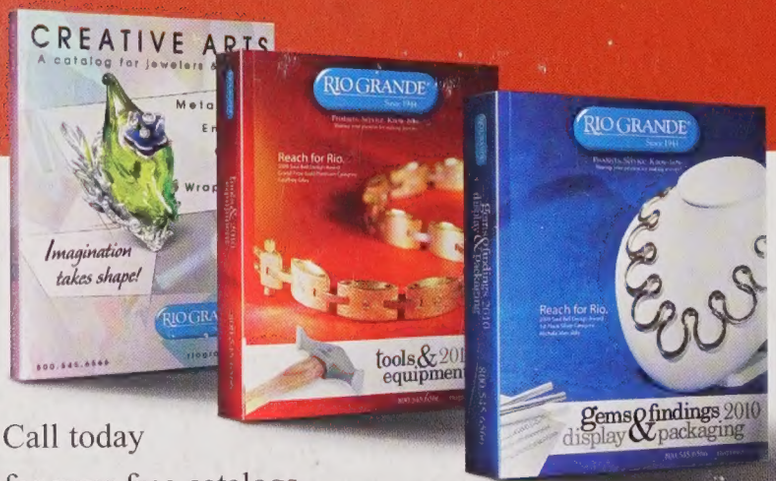

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